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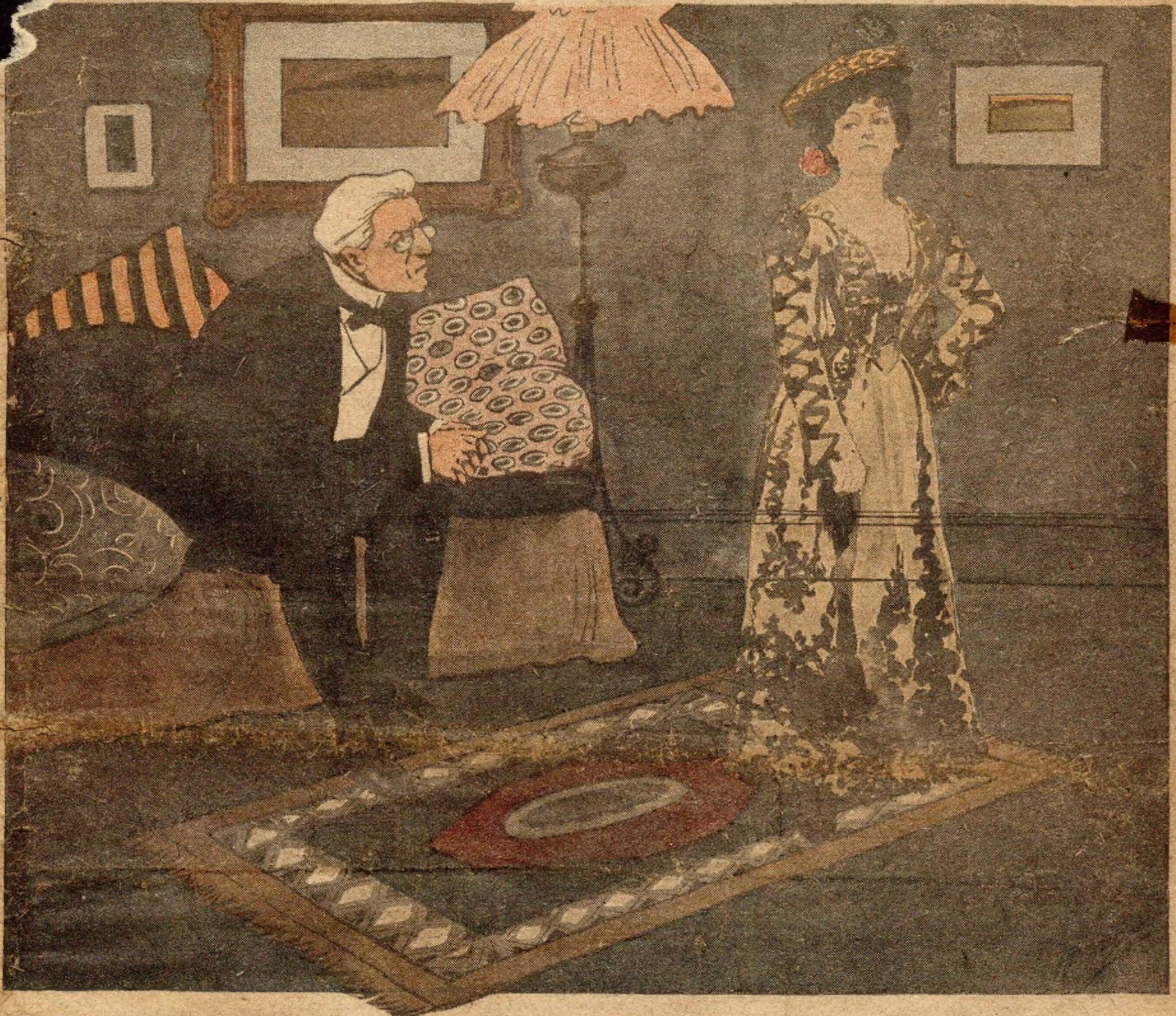

The Luck of Gregory;

Or, A ROCKY ROAD TO FORTUNE By JULIAN F. DARROW

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CHAPTER I.

DOORS OF PARADISE OPEN.

AS he opened the door of his little hallroom den in the third-class Gotham boarding house, Bob Gregory involuntarily cast a hasty and nervous glance in the direction of a rather rickety table, upon which he was wont to keep a few of the popular magazines, and which also served him in lieu of a writing desk.

It was a regular habit he had somehow acquired of late, with hope eternally springing anew in his breast; and though each day brought its keen disappointment, he continued to scribble with grim determination what he considered to be up-to-date tales of weird adventure, and invest the last few pennies he could muster together in postage—which caught him coming and going, as it were.

Occasionally the slatternly landlady placed a package that had come by post upon this same table; but alas, it was always the same wearisome old story—"declined with thanks;" for, like curses and chickens, his best effusions persisted in coming home to roost.

Yes, there was a suspicious-looking brown envelope lying there now—how he had come to hate the very sight of them! A lump in his throat threatened to choke him as he tried to draw a long breath, that was intended for a sigh of resignation; for he was wondering, poor chap, how he was ever going to keep his promise to his landlady about that back rent, long past due.

Things certainly looked about as black as they well could, and Bob felt that the long delayed crisis must surely have arrived with this last stroke of ill-luck; for since he had now lost his miserably paid job downtown he could never meet his obligations, and must needs find himself adrift upon the streets.

This untidy room had never seemed very much of a heaven in his eyes, but with such a deucedly unpleasant prospect staring him in the face, somehow it began to take on a mighty cheery and comfortable atmosphere.

At least it was warm, while out on the streets the keen March wind had seemed to chill him to the very marrow; for truth to tell he had some time back been forced to put his seedy top-coat "in hock" in order to appease the clamorous demands of a ravenous and ungodly appetite.

After heaving that big sigh, he slowly approached the fatal table with its burden of woe, and tried to bolster up his courage by flippant remarks that, however, were anything but humorous to the poor devil who gave them utterance.

"Well," he said, sarcastically as a starter, "I vowed that this should be my last effort, and seeing that I appear to be such a rank failure as a romance writer the sooner I realize the bitter truth the better. This calls for heroic treatment. I felt sure I had a winner in 'Dappleton's Little Dodge,' but it seems I'm only out six times eight cents for postage—this is its third home-coming, and its last! Here goes to kill ambition—it's into the scrap-basket at once for yours, Dappy."

He snatched up the offending envelope, and made a move as if to carry out his murderous intention, when of a sudden he paused dramatically.

"Why, hello! What's this mean—the miserable brigand, to return my story with only a picayune little two-cent stamp stuck to the envelope, when I'll swear I inclosed eight of my precious pennies! No wonder publishers get rich when they rake 'em in that way, the blood-suckers. But say, hang it all, they've made a beastly mistake, and it can't be my bulky yarn in this thin envelop! A check—the very thought scares me; it would be too good to be true. But hello! again, I say, what's this up here in the left hand corner—eh, 'Root, Hogg & Dey, Attorneys, Temple Court, Nassau street.' That's certainly the limit!" and he stared at the envelope with the tragic look of a king who had just learned of the loss of his throne.

"Oh, yes, now I know, now I understand what that old skinflint, Marks, the tailor, meant, when he gave me that precious scowl yesterday, and then grinned like an ape. He's going to try and collect! Well, let him, that's all; if he can squeeze blood out of a turnip then he may get satisfaction. The clothes are deuced shabby, and by thunder, I've got just thirty cents left out of my overcoat money! Collect ha! ha! I defy him to—I'll—I'll——" and then the rest died away in gasps as he savagely and in desperation tore open the offending brown envelope, snatched out the inclosure, and commenced to read the anticipated dread summons, his eyes opening wider and wider, and his breath coming in weak little snatches.

It was really a picture for an artist, Gregory standing there in his desolate closet of a hall bedroom, and reading the dictum of Fate.

When he finally reached the firm's ostentatious signature at the bottom of the second typewritten sheet he felt so weak that he actually fell back in a chair, his legs sprawled out, and his arms hanging helplessly at his sides, the amazing legal communication gripped in a spasmodic clutch.

And no wonder, for who wouldn't come within an inch of fainting away upon being made the recipient of such an extraordinary freak of fortune, under the nerve-paralyzing conditions that had just at that moment been facing Bob Gregory?

Then he raised the paper, and when able to catch his breath read it all over again, this time aloud, interlarding exclamations of his own as he went on:

"Mr. Robert Jenkins Gregory,
"Care of Mrs. Sarah Jones,
"Twenty-Second Street,
"New York City.

"Dear Mr. Gregory:—We have just managed to obtain your address from Mr. Jefferson, your publisher—[My publisher, when I never had but a measly ten dollars from him this last four months! Oh, well! Let it go at that]—who has very kindly given us all the assistance in his power to bring us in touch with you—[What a pity a little of that same touch didn't come my way the last time I saw old Jeff, eh?]—It is our pleasing duty, sir, to inform you that a very extraordinary discovery has just been made in this office, and in which it appears that you are very intimately concerned. We trust that you will overlook any apparent carelessness on the part of our Mr. Root, lately deceased, who had entire charge of the affair, having been the consulting attorney for the late Robert Carberry Gregory of Lexington avenue, this city, for many years.

"At the death of the latter, some years back, when his vast estate was to be settled, we believed we held the last will and testament of the deceased; but upon searching for the same were unable to discover any trace of it. Mr. Root had just recovered from a severe spell of sickness, and was utterly unable to say positively whether his client had later taken the document away to destroy it at his leisure or not; but we so understood it, and under an earlier will, drawn by Mr. Gregory's former solicitors, the next of kin came into the property.

"By a strange and fortuitous accident, while we were having Mr. Root's private desk repaired, the missing document was discovered, it having slipped back of the drawer in which it had been carefully placed. This astonishing resurrection places us in an unenviable position; but we desire to do our bounden duty, regardless of loss of prestige in connection with our well-known responsibility.

"This document leaves almost the entire estate to the heirs—if any—of the oldest son of Robert Carberry Gregory, one Alexander, who married without consent, and was at the time disinherited; nor had his father ever heard a word from him during the years that had since passed.

"We immediately made a quiet search in order to ascertain whether there really had been any issue of this marriage, with the discovery that both Alexander and his wife Lydia had been defunct for some years, and that you, as their only child, were the only living heir. It would seem as though there could be no possible mistake; and hence we should be pleased to have you come to our chambers at your earliest convenience, bringing with you all evidences of your identity that you can collect, when we stand ready to advance any reasonable amount you may desire, and take charge of your case, so that you may come into your own as speedily as the law allows.

"We feel that because of the unfortunate accident occurring in our office that has kept you out of your patrimony so long, we cannot do otherwise than offer you our assistance in every way possible. Trusting that you will generously overlook this strange miscarriage of justice, in which we chance to be so intimately concerned, and that we may have the pleasure of serving you in the future, as we did your esteemed grandfather in the past, we beg to remain,

"Faithfully yours,
"ROOT, HOGG & DEY, Attorneys.
"Dict. by Mr. Hogg."

By the time Bob had read that unique letter over a dozen times he knew it by heart, and was then pinching himself to make sure he was really and truly awake.

Losing his parents as a boy he had never learned the whole secret of their unhappy marriage—unhappy only in so far as their pinching poverty was concerned, for they had been devoted to each other up to the time a tragedy had left poor Bob an orphan.

True, he had known that he came of good stock, but understanding that his dear father had been badly treated in some way by his relatives, he would have died rather than have appealed to them for aid, in his sorest extremity, even if he had known of their identity, which he did not.

Now it was all plain as print and his soul swelled within him at the mere thought of coming into his patrimony—how he delighted to linger on that legal word which the lawyers had used with such a flourish.

Tomorrow—but why wait for all those wearisome hours to elapse, when they had actually begged him to lose no time in securing an interview at their chambers—it was only two o'clock in the afternoon, as he discovered by looking out of his one window at a neighboring church tower, not possessing such a luxury as a watch; and lawyers may be found about Temple Court until three or after he knew.

Bob realized he would never sleep a wink if he tried to wait until morning to clinch this glorious thing, or have his eyes opened to the disappointing fact of its being a chimera; so, buttoning up his thin coat again he confided the precious letter, together, with such proofs of his identity as he could hurriedly pick up, to an inside pocket, and rushed out of the house; to the surprise of the landlady, who was just in the act of toddling upstairs to learn whether or not the letter had placed her backward roomer in a position to make a payment on account.

Bob electrified the old lady by grinning at her as he went flying past, and at the door actually turning to blow a kiss backward as he called out: "Return in an hour or two—don't worry—going to get my patrimony!" but she shook her head sadly, and thought he was rather going to the lunatic asylum.

Making sure that he still possessed that thirty cents Bob entered a drug-store where there was a public 'phone, and calling up the law firm asked for Mr. Hogg; to whom he communicated the fact that he was Robert Jenkins Gregory, and that he was even then on his way downtown to interview the gentlemen in connection with the strange and delightful letter he had just received from their house.

Mr. Hogg hastened to tender his felicitations in a very unctious voice, and begged him to drop in as soon as he could, not forgetting to fetch along everything possible that would add to the identification, although he himself already felt positive in that regard.

The subway train, even though an express, just crawled along, according to Bob's idea, for he was wrought up to a desperate pitch of suspense, as you or I would likewise have been, with a fortune hanging in prospect, and that interview intended to settle things still coming—he felt a cold chill at the bare thought of its all turning out to be a mistake, and wondered if in that event he might not be justified in ending his misery by a jump from the rear deck of an East River ferryboat.

But there happened to be no need of resorting to such a tragedy; for Mr. Hogg was delighted with the proofs he advanced, told him more or less about the estate, with a promise of still further details later on, and actually insisted upon forcing—imagine if you can that benevolent old lawyer taking hold of Bob and stuffing yellowbacks into his pockets—a little loan of, say five hundred, upon him; surely a small favor, he insisted, considering how long the true heir had been kept out of his patrimony through the accidental loss of the will while in their keeping; and happy Bob willingly consented to let bygones be bygones, and retain the firm as his legal advisers; Mr. Hogg admitted that they were willing to serve him faithfully, and meanwhile would esteem it a favor if Bob made them his bankers, and drew upon them as he felt the necessity.

Well, Bob Gregory went down from that office hardly knowing whether he were standing on his heels or on his head, and feeling that he was walking on air; but the sensation of that delightful roll of yellowbacks in his pocket caused his heart to swell with gratitude, making him feel very sympathetic toward all humanity.

He soon made change by purchasing decent garments and new top-coat, besides a hat and all other such things as befitted a gentleman; and then to cap the climax he actually took a cab back to his lodgings, something he had always promised himself as the greatest of all treats if his ship ever came in.

Mrs. Jones came very near having a fit when she saw the gentleman who alighted at her humble door, and recognized her erstwhile impecunious lodger; and she certainly held her very breath for awe when that same Bob Gregory flashed his roll before her dazzled eyes, and bade her keep the change, after passing over a bill of large denomination.

For two day Bob enjoyed the sensation of living, something he had known very little about in times past. He was wise enough not to make a fool of himself; but it certainly was pleasant to cut a few fellows on the street who had been supercilious to him when fortune's frowns were turned his way; as well as give a boost to those newspaper comrades who had proved true friends in times of distress.

Of course he had to change his lodgings, taking a room in a more pretentious locality; but while his money just seemed to melt away he did not squander any of it in riotous living, and kept perfectly sober through it all; which, to some of his Bohemian friends was the greatest of wonders, for they knew full well what would have happened to them under the same conditions.

Then, receiving a few lines from Mr. Hogg, hinting that perhaps it might be wise for him to come down for another interview, when he would be told something regarding the other conditions of the will under which he was perpetually to enjoy all this prosperity, he was brought face to face with a feature of the case that did not give him quite so much pleasure.

CHAPTER II.

THE OTHER WORLD.

Having led something of a bohemian life Bob Gregory was not one of the kind to worry over troubles that might never get beyond the threatening stage; and hence he made up his mind to enjoy what fortune had thrust into his hand while the sun of prosperity shone, and let tomorrow take care of itself.

One night remained to him before he must hike down once more to those musty chambers of the legal gentlemen who were conducting his little excursion into the realms of romance; and he had set his mind upon what he wanted to do ere again facing the oily Mr. Hogg.

There was that Gregory mansion, now occupied by the trespassers whom he meant to oust from their holdings just as soon as Mr. Hogg was ready to take legal proceedings—he seemed possessed by a strange yet overpowering desire to see what the house looked like, and mayhap rest his eyes on some of these relatives of his who, in their prosperity, had never cared an iota whether such a being as Robert Jenkins Gregory existed.

Perhaps it was a foolish resolution, but quite natural withal; and Bob, having been a writer of romantic fiction might be forgiven for such a streak of curiosity that in another would have been unpardonable. He went, all the same, being the possessor of the Gregory temperament, which included a pretty tidy vein of obstinacy.

The lawyer had told him about this elegant place, which was not the old home of the Gregory family but a mansion purchased by Robert in middle life, and fitted up regardless of expense, simply to please his handsome wife. Bob had no trouble in finding it; indeed, to his surprise and secret delight it seemed to be the center of interest in the aristocratic neighborhood on this particular night, for lights gleamed from every window, a caterer had spread his carpet and awning from the curb up the steps to the door, and elegant equipages were constantly stopping to allow their occupants to alight.

Bob hovered around as if fascinated by the sight of so much swelldom; for he could easily understand that these people must belong to the very exclusive circles of the upper four hundred.

Really, he never enjoyed himself more in all his life, just "gloating" over all this splendor, and trying to realize that he, poor old Bob Gregory, but a few days back "on his uppers" the worst kind, now really and truly owned this fine mansion with all that it signified; and that the occupants who prided themselves on being proud members of the upper crust were nothing but pensioners on his bounty.

Why, even when a supercilious footman who was pompously looking after the opening of the carriage doors, noting how he lingered and peered at each new arrival, took it upon himself to warn him to keep back under penalty of having the attending officer take him in charge, Bob actually chuckled with rare good nature. He could well afford to laugh, with the cards stacked so heavily in his favor.

Perhaps tomorrow when he came into his own it would be "twenty-three" for that proud-stepping footman who strutted about with such a lordly air; for democratic Bob Gregory meant to have none of his ilk around him, if he knew it.

However, he adopted different tactics, wishing to secure some information concerning these people who, unconscious of the awful cataclysm that threatened their fortunes, were entertaining the very select in the Gregory mansion. So he sought the officer who was hanging about to see that everything went on smoothly, and with the charming manner that marks the newspaper man out of a job bribed him first of all with a Havana, after which he proceeded to pump the guardian of the peace for all he was worth.

In this way he learned that the name of the host was Claude DePeyster, and that he had a wife and several children, the latter grown up and supposed to be quite good catches in a social way. The DePeysters had been comparat'vely poor up to the time old Gregory died and they came into possession of his millions, the lady having been a daughter of the retired banker.

"Was old Gregory so very rich?" Bob asked, with apparent carelessness. Thereupon the obliging officer asserted that the gentleman in question had owned several millions, if all that was told about him were true.

"I knew him mesilf, and it was a quare ould chap he seemed to be. Sometimes he would desert his foine home here, and go to live in the old rookery where they came from when this elegint house was bought. That was a long time after his wife died, and the daughter's family came to live with him—the one as now holds forth in there now, by the same token. I think the ould man got tired of these gay doings, and wanted to be by himself where he was once happy. Anyhow, there he would go, and all alone, or wid only his man Cardigan for company. But after all he died here in the foine house, a quare ould duck he was, in truth."

Then the officer proceeded to narrate several incidents calculated to prove his assertion that the old millionaire had become peculiar to a marked degree during his later years.

To all of this Bob listened with interest, for he seemed to feel that there was a chance of himself experiencing something along the line of the old man's vagaries on the morrow, when he went down to hear the further conditions of his coming into possession. He would have given something for a chance to set eyes on these aristocratic "beggars" who were holding forth so gayly in his house; just to satisfy himself as to what a relative really looked like; for, so far as he could remember he had never as yet run up against one from the time he was a boy.

Several wild schemes for ingratiating himself in the good graces of the caterer, and securing a temporary job as one of his assistants flashed into his vivd imagination; but on reconsidering them he decided that they were decidedly quixotic, and could only lead him into trouble; for what might not a greenhorn waiter do in a crush like that to draw attention to himself, and bring down the wrath of offended guests upon his head?

Bob decided that he was not quite ready to appear ridiculous in the eyes of these people, however much he wished to see them sparkling and scintillating for the last time as stars of the fashionable constellation. He hovered about still longer, there being a strange and subtle fascination in the mere thought of what a secret he carried in his breast, and how like a thunderbolt it would fall upon that brillian assemblage did he but choose to speak

Of course he was not the only curious one watching the arrival of the guests, and gazing at the brilliantly lighted mansion as though it might be a paradise from which an edict of Fate excluded common humanity; there were numerous parties, men, women and children standing across the street or near by, gaping and wondering at the gorgeous robes of the ladies, and the sparkle of the diamonds which decked their persons. Bob finally began to observe his fellow star-gazers, and after his fashion to speculate what all this glory might signify in their eyes.

The women were absorbed and spellbound; but with regard to the men such could hardly be said to cover the case; one he quickly decided must have socialistic tendencies about him, for he seemed to be observing the scene with a nasty curl of the lip as though scorning such frothy fuss and feathers, when there were so many serious questions to be solved, questions involving the fate of untold millions yet unborn, and another he knew must be a clerk who hoped to pick up a few wrinkles by means of which he might dazzle the girl with whom he was keeping steady company.

So it went on, and discerning Bob found quite a little amusement in thus deciding who these various people might be, and with what emotions they gazed upon an assemblage where hundreds of millions in cash were represented. Then he found his attention riveted upon a figure that seemed unusually bent upon seeing into the carriages, and watched the windows, as if hoping to get a glimpse of the scene within the drawingroom; he even noticed the woman—for it was one of the other sex who had aroused his curiosity anew—mounting upon the stoop of a dwelling across the way, and craning her neck as she looked, all the while seeming to be talking in whispers to herself.

"Crazy, I guess," he thought, still watching her as she crossed the street and pushed her way in among the lines being held back by the policeman; and while the object of his regard was thus moving restlessly to and fro she came under the glare of an electric headlight upon an automobile that had just drawn up alongside the curb, and from which a couple of gentlemen alighted, both wearing Inverness coats to cover their evening clothes.

Bob saw a face that seemed to give him a strange shock, he could not tell just why; but it seemed to him that somehow, somewhere, that countenance had been or was fated to be connected with his history. A queer notion for a sensible young fellow to entertain under the circumstances; especially as he was more than ever convinced that the owner of the remarkable face was non compos mentis—there was a glare in her black eyes, a look of intensity upon her not unhandsome countenance, and something out of the common in every movement she made that told him this. You see Bob had once been an attendant in an asylum for three months, when all else failed to give him a living, and had given up the job because he could not stand the pitiable sights he saw there; so that perhaps he was fairly well qualified to judge of this woman's case offhand.

He was really pleased to see her finally turn away with a gesture of despair, and vanish down the street like a wraith; for he had been afraid lest her disordered mind might have urged her to some act of violence; but that dark wild face was stamped indelibly upon his memory, and he wondered if he would ever see the owner of it again.

"I hope not,' he muttered, with a shiver, for the incident had really made an impression upon him for which he was unable to account.

The two gentlemen who had come in the car were now walking up the steps, and he saw that while one was a distinguished-looking man with white hair and mustache, the other appeared to be a young fellow with a smooth face, and the air of a society swell.

"Who are they?" he managed to ask his friend, the cop, as he introduced another weed between his itching fingers.

"The ould man is Baron Plantz, the Austrian high-muck-a-muck down at Washington, and the young chap is Archibald Vandergraff. He's run through wid his money, but they do be saying he's engaged to marry the only daughter of the De Peysters, and that it'll be a cool million in his pocket when he takes her," was what the obliging policeman said.

"Oh! he will, eh? There's many a slip between the cup and the lip; and perhaps between Mr. Vandergraff and that very cool million. If I've got anything to say about it, and I reckon I may, it'll be twenty-three for yours,' Van. But this kind of thing palls upon me, and I think I'll wend my way back to my den and turn in. Then tomorrow, oh; yes! tomorrow, I'll interview my good friend Mr. Hogg, and find out what's next on the program." And muttering thus Bob sauntered down the avenue.

CHAPTER III.

ROCKY ROAD TO FORTUNE.

It was just eleven on the following morning when Bob opened the outer door of the lawyers' chambers in Temple Court. This time he was obsequiously received by the attendant, who had scowled at him on his former visit; evidently the word had leaked out that he was a prospective millionaire, and nothing could be too good for him now.

Bob, however, paid little attention to such sycophants, having a poor opinion of the class in general; and was speedily ushered into the sacred sanctum of the venerable lawyer, whom he found looking serious enough in all conscience.

"Wonder what's in the wind now?" thought Bob, with a cold chill chasing up and down his spinal column at the bare thought of his being told the whole affair had proved a great mistake, and that after all he would have to return to his old boarding-house, and the agony of writing stories that found no market.

Still he did not lose his nerve, but responded to the lawyer's sober greeting with a warm handshake, and affected a carelessness he was far from feeling.

"You wanted to see me, Mr. Hogg, on especial business I believe? As I told you before, I am leaving the management of my affairs solely in your experienced hands, and when you think it best to make a move, looking to final action toward putting me in possession of my rights I shall be guided by your advice. And now, sir, what is it you think it time I knew in connection with this will of my grandfather, which came to light so strangely?"

In this bold manner did he bid the legal gentleman open up and tell him the very worst; so long as it failed to throw him and his fortunes back into the same old dreadful "grind" he believed he could stand it, no matter what its character.

"Sit down, Mr. Gregory. I am about to tell you something that will perhaps set you wondering as to whether there may not have been a grain of truth in the report that circulated around some time before your esteemed grandsire quitted this scene of action, to the effect that he was slightly deranged; but sir, I want to assure you, on my honor, that while the old gentleman may have been queer in some of his actions, as elderly persons frequently will, he was as sound in his head as ever in his life. True, he dabbled a bit in spiritualism toward the last, and I rather imagine was taken in to some extent by several of those foreign fakirs, but he never did a thing in his life without a definite object in it. I say this even while admitting that I cannot just now see for the life of me why he should insert such a ridiculous clause in the body of his will, making it absolutely necessary that the heir of his son Alexander should comply with that same condition to the letter before he could come into possession of the estate. And yet knowing him as I did, I am ready to declare that there must be some good reason for such action; and I would advise you to follow out the directions to the letter."

It can be readily understood that such language aroused Bob's curiosity to fever pitch, and he wondered what monumental task was about to be set before him, which he must accomplish before he proved himself fit for the smiles of fortune.

Even that officer had declared the old ex-banker eccentric, and now he was to have some positive evidence along that line thrust before him—in a way, perhaps, that might not add to his peace of mind. He might have imagined all manner of weird possibilities, such as would be apt to infest the brain of one hovering on the border of insanity; but it would have been folly wasting his time when the solution of the mystery was so near, and all he had to do in order to learn the truth was to ask Mr. Hogg to lift the veil.

"Please go on and tell me all about it," he remarked, trying to appear quite at his ease, though he knew it was useless endeavoring to deceive those keen gray eyes back of the staring lenses.

"Perhaps I can do no better than to read the whole document to you, my dear young sir, laying particular stress upon the clause pertaining to the task that is now to be placed in your hands. Listen, please, until I finish."

Thereupon he took up a formidable-looking document and with many hems and haws proceeded to read the "last will and testament of Robert Carberry Gregory." It is only necessary that we give the special portion which concerned the fulfilling of the conditions laid down by the deceased millionaire, and which in so many words ran as follows:

"And it is further made a condition to the above bequest concerning all my properties which I thus leave to the issue of my beloved son, Alexander, that in order to qualify to become my heir it shall be necessary for him, not later than ten days after he shall be notified personally by my legal representatives, to take up his abode in the old Gregory mansion, now his property, and spend the whole of each succeeding night there without human company, from the hour of eleven to seven for the term of three months; a registering apparatus being installed therein by my lawyers before his occupancy of the premises, to prove beyond question that he has religiously and faithfully complied with this condition."

Bob Gregory smiled. So was the ogre laid low, according to his way of thinking; for all this seemed almost too simple to be called exacting—bless the foolish old man, what could he be thinking of to test the nerve of his expected heir in this way? Why, any one would be only too willing to comply with such easy terms in order to come into riches.

Mr. Hogg noted the expression of amusement, and shook his wise old head.

"It may sound silly, Robert, but depend upon it he had some definite idea back of all; there was something worrying the old gentleman during this period of his life, I have reason to believe, and it strikes me that this desire to have you sleep in that—er—house for three months, and alone too, has more or less to do with it," he remarked, taking his glasses off to polish them.

"The dickens it has! By the way, Mr. Hogg, is there anything particularly odd about this house itself—the old home of my grandfather before he bought the Lexington avenue palace? I ask because something in your tone seems to indicate that it possessed an extraordinary attraction for the old gentleman," Bob went on to inquire, noting this serious expression on the other's face.

"Well, only that it is said to be haunted," he replied, soberly.

Bob looked at him to see if he were really in earnest, and discovering evidences to that effect laughed outright.

"I am not a fanciful man, Mr. Hogg, and ghosts have never given me the slightest anxiety in the wide world; so that as far as the stories go it will never cause me the least worry to spend all the nights of the next three months in that old Gregory house, wherever it may be. But I must say I have my doubts about the sanity of my respected ancestor, who could include such a ludicrous condition to the terms of the document by which I am to inherit his property. Nothing was said in the other will by which these De Peysters claimed the estate—nothing along these lines, I mean? Surely the elegant gentleman was not compelled to bunk alone in that clammy dwelling—for I suppose it is something out of the usual run in its character—before he could come into possession?" he demanded.

"Certainly not; but then that will was made sometime before while your grandfather was still angry at your father for his disobedience; and besides, he had not then commenced to show these—er—eccentricities of disposition."

"Oh! well, what does it matter? I'd do things a dozen times more disagreeable than guard a spooky house for a few months in order to qualify for the glorious result. Now tell me all you know about this place—where is it—are there any sleeping quarters habitable after these years of neglect—will you see to it that your part of the contract is carried out, and a—what d'ye call it—registering apparatus is fastened where I can work the same at stated times during each night, and thus prove my faithfulness? Please go on and tell me these things, sir."

"The apparatus is being installed today, and you will find full instructions fastened to the same. As to the house, it is situated uptown, being one of the very few buildings still surrounded by their own grounds, inside a high fence and back of a green hedge. I have written the address on this card, which you can carry with you for reference. Also, here is a little document showing that you are acting within the knowledge of our firm, understood to have been the executors of the Gregory estate; this in case you should be bothered by some officious watchman, and requested to show cause for entering the seemingly abandoned house back of the hedge. Here too is a key which will admit you to the front door. You will find that the place has been fitted up for occupancy, though I imagine it will still be rather cheerless after all these years of vacancy. I have given orders to have fuel taken in, and a fire made ready to light in the favorite grate of the old gentleman, so that you can make yourself fairly comfortable. After today you must attend to these things yourself, for according to the strict letter of the contract I take it that not another soul must you bring into that mansion during these three months, beginning tonight. Do you understand just what that means, Robert?"

"Certainly, and I shall comply most jealously, you may be sure, for it would be silly my looking a gift-horse in the mouth. The old gentleman may have been—er—a bit eccentric in his way of looking at things, but I do not think the conditions too onerous for my acceptance. Rely upon it, sir, I shall bunk in that same Gregory house every blessed night from this time on; and mighty thankful too that I have a roof over my head to call my own. I reckon the spirits he was beginning to communicate with will never bother me; because I'm not at all in sympathy with them; and I've understood there must be complete accord in all these manifestations. By the way, Mr. Hogg, I suppose there is no objection to my smoking a pipe in the house?"

"By no means, Robert—make yourself as comfy as you can, for somehow I fancy you may need it before your long vigil is ended. Do you use liquor, my boy?"

"Never to excess. Poverty inculcated that noble principle in my disposition, and I suppose I shall always abide by it now. Why do you ask?" responded Bob.

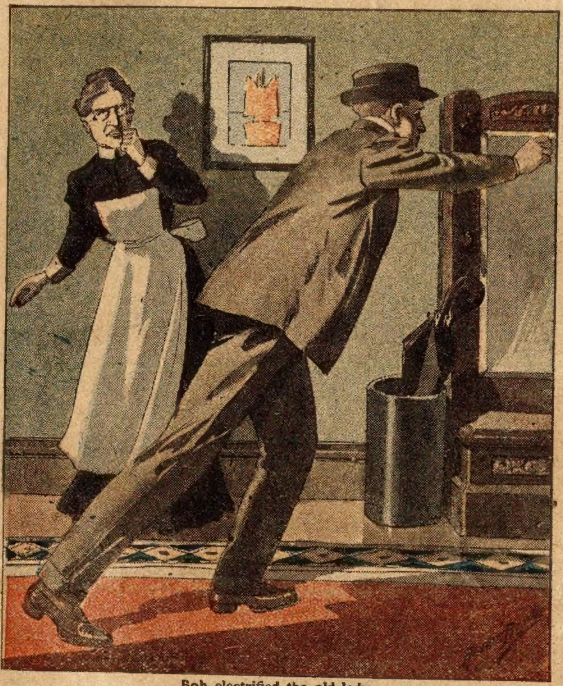
"Oh, well, if I had such a lonely vigil to keep I'd make sure of the presence of spirits, but they would have to be of the proper brand. However, you must please yourself about that. And again, I would advise you to take some sort of firearm along with you; not that I imagine you will ever have need of it, but one feels so much better off for the company of a sturdy friend with six teeth."

Bob started at these words, as if they might have suggested something to him; but if so he did not mention it, only asking to look at that portion of the will once more that he could kodak it upon his mind.

"Is there anything else you wish to speak to me about, sir?" he finally asked, preparing to depart.

"Nothing that I can recall now. I trust you may get along all right, and that from time to time you will drop in to see me during the day, to report progress. I am deeply interested in your fortunes, and wish you the best of luck. Do not be rash in anything you may undertake, and if puzzled by whatever you may see or hear take me into your confidence. As I said before this is not the freak of a crazy man, however eccentric it may seem; but there is some sort of reason back of it all, as will be made manifest sooner or later. Goodby, Robert. I admire your pluck, though I do not envy you the task that is before you in order to make good; but that may be because I happen to be superstitious by nature, and half inclined to believe in the ability of departed spirits to return to this world. But, take the little persuader along with you, son; nobody can tell what strange thing may befall you there. You have money enough for the present—yes, well, call on us when it runs short, remember." And with these last words Mr. Hogg ushered him out of his private sanctum, and Bob once more descended those stairs, but this time in hardly so jovial a mood as before.

This extremely interesting story will be continued in next week's Ledger, presenting the readers with some very strange happenings. If you are not a subscriber to the Ledger, you are strongly urged to send in your subscription at once. Every family should take the Ledger, as humor and stories and pictures make life brighter and pleasanter for all, bringing health and entertainment and doing every one good. Be wise and attend to this today.



Bob electrified the old lady.

* * *

Making Old News New.

Making old news seem timely was one of the diversions of Dr. Jean Charcot, the French explorer, during his two years of isolation in the Antarctic ice, where he did some wonderful work in the scientific tabulation of tides and measurement of ocean depths. He carried with him two years' files of the Paris newspapers and on each day spread the papers of the corresponding day of the two preceding years on the table in the cabin for the benefit of his followers:

"I have recently turned out from a locker," recorded Dr. Charcot in his diary on July 7, midwinter, "complete files of the Matin and the Figaro for two years before our departure, kindly presented to us by their editors. Every day I put on the wardroom table the numbers corresponding to the present date, and personally I have never read the papers so attentively or thoroughly.

"If I must confess it, the news, now so ancient, the scandals, the affairs, interest me just as much as if I had never heard of them. I had forgotten them nearly all, and I await the next issue with impatience. I am now much better acquainted with my country's politics and the world's happenings in 1907 than I have ever been, and probably than I shall ever be again."

* * *

Charity covereth a multitude of people with cast off garments.

CLIMBING THE BARRIER;

Or, The Search for the South Pole

By STEPHEN ANGUS COX

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CHAPTER V.

MUSIC ON THE VIOLIN.

THE weather still continued fine, as the days rolled away, and southward steadily the steamer, Ice Queen, plowed her way. The equator was reached and crossed, and then the descent of the southern half of the hemisphere was begun, with the needle of the compass pointing south instead of north.

Somehow, the next day after the interview given in the preceding chapter, Eugenia appeared to be more than usually happy. There was a light in her eyes that had not been there before, excepting when she was near the first mate, when she met his look with the same calm, dispassionate expression that had characterized it before.

The day wore away, Genie being with her father part of the time. She took a lesson in navigation from him, and later in the day one from the first mate, and she was now at the point where she could take an observation and work out the position of the ship, and she was happy. She was looking forward to the evening, though she scarcely acknowledged the fact to herself, and after supper she went out on deck and took her accustomed place on a steamer chair, and sat there, looking across the waters, and musing, first of one thing, then of another, and finally she remembered the conversation of the evening before, remembered how the first mate had taken hold of her hand, and again she felt the peculiar thrill, and at that moment the mate approached and took a seat near her.

"A pleasant evening, Miss Holman," he said.

"Yes, Mr. Worth," was the reply. Then she added, after a moment. "Dick I should have said. You must not forget that we are comrades, and that my name to you is Genie."

"If you still wish it that way, Genie," was the reply, in a quiet, calm voice.

"I do. I don't like this stilted, formal style of talk, especially when we are to be together for a year or two, and engaged in a hazardous enterprise, where we shall be comrades, in fact. But, I wish to say, Dick, that I am more than pleased with my advancement in the art of navigation. I could almost command a ship now, don't you think so?"

"A steamship, yes, as then you would not have to have any knowledge of the work of sailors. And I suppose you intend to own a steamship?"

"A steam yacht, yes. I have always wanted to go everywhere about the world, and I can do so by owning my own steam yacht, and commanding it. I could of course, hire a commander, but I would much rather command my own vessel, and will take a great deal more pleasure in traveling about the world then."

"I suppose you are right, Genie. Well, we have from a year to two years ahead of us in the ice-fields of the South, with lots of experiences and adventures perhaps, so you will have plenty of time to complete your education in navigation. Your father may let you command this vessel, after you have had a little more experience in the art of navigation and managing a ship, and I must say that I shall be proud to be your second in command."

Genie laughed, and then went ahead with the conversation, which continued till about ten o'clock, when the girl said she would go to her room, and bidding Worth good night, she went into her cabin, and to her room. Somehow, their talk that evening, had not been so satisfactory. There had been a sort of restraint about the mate's manner that had been felt by the girl, and she could not understand it, and wondered what had caused it.

She was not sleepy, so she turned on the light and took up a magazine and read awhile, after which she undressed and got in bed. Even then she could not get to sleep, and presently, as she lay with her face to the wall, she heard voices, seemingly at her side, yet low and indistinct. By listening intently, however, she presently was able to make out the articulation, and to understand what was said, and she even recognized one of the voices. It was that of the second mate, Ralston.

She heard only a few words, when she gave a start. The second mate was evidently trying to induce some one that he was talking to, undoubtedly one of the deck hands, to act insubordinately during Worth's watch, some evening, and then strike him down. But the man did not wish to do so, and although the second mate tried hard to persuade him, offering to pay him a hundred dollars if he would do so, the fellow said "no," that he wouldn't risk it. If he was on shore, he would do so, for then he would have a chance to get away afterward, but on shipboard, he would be seized and placed in irons, and would be turned over to the authorities at the first port touched. The sailor promised to keep the affair a secret, however, speaking as though Ralston had some kind of a hold on him; they had known each other ashore, and doubtless the second mate had known of some crime the fellow had committed.

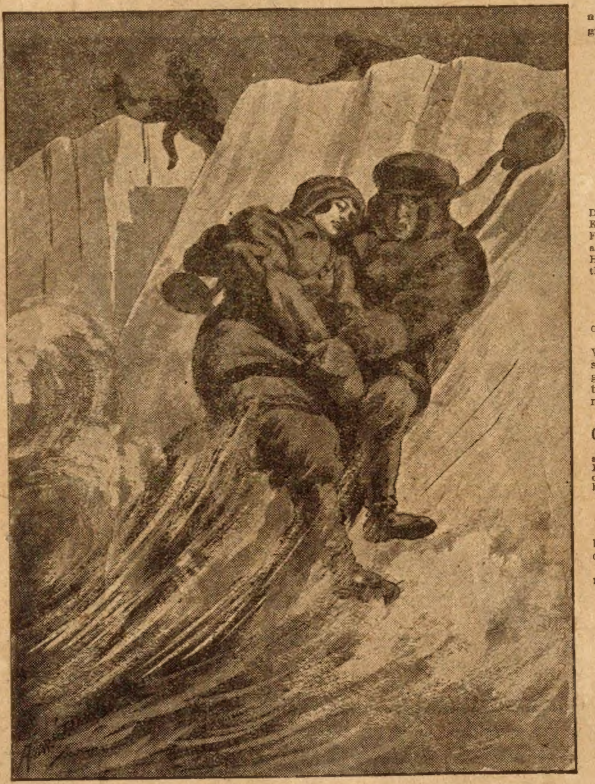
"If we should touch at some port, and Worth went ashore and I could go with him, I might make a try of it, Ralston," the sailor said. "But that's the best I could do."

"Oh, all right," was the reply. "But I don't think we will touch at any port before reaching the Antarctic."

They then walked away, and their voices were heard no more, but Genie, lying there, open-eyed and wakeful, realized why it was that the second mate did not like the first mate, and wondered how much trouble would ensue before the end of the expedition. Next day she thought of telling the first mate what she had heard, but dismissed the idea, as the sailor had stated that he would not attempt anything against Worth unless they landed at a port, and in case they did that, Genie could then put the mate on his guard.

Ralston was pleasant to Genie, and seemed to try to make a good impression, but he did not succeed, though Genie always accorded him courteous treatment. The second mate was at a disadvantage, owing to the fact that he knew nothing of navigation, and he realized this fact.

An evening or two after that Genie brought her violin on deck, and seating herself, began to play. She had kept up her practice pretty well, but had confined the practice to the cabin, and the officers and crew enjoyed hearing the girl play very much. Genie was feeling in a somewhat dreamy mood, on this evening, and played softly at first, but gradually became enthused, and played louder, and in a vivacious manner, continuing till Worth appeared, when she ceased playing for a few minutes, to exchange greetings with him and converse, as was her custom.



Several of the members fell and went rolling down.

"Don't stop playing," said Worth. "I love music. Go ahead, and play some of your favorite airs."

"I have just been doing that," with a laugh. "So now, if you have any favorite airs, I might play those for you."

"I like any music," was the reply.

Genie played another air, and she had just finished, when the second mate appeared, and nodding, he said: "I could not sleep, and as I enjoy music, I thought I would come out and listen. You have no objections, Miss Holman?"

"No, indeed," with a smile. "You are welcome to listen. I love music so well myself, that I am always glad when my music gives pleasure to others."

Genie played again and the mates complimented her rendering of the air. The she said: "Perhaps you play the violin, Mr. Worth; or you, Mr. Ralston?"

"No, I don't play any musical instrument," said Worth.

"I used to play the violin a little," said Ralston. There was something in his tone that attracted Genie's attention and earned her interest at once, and even Worth noticed it. He seemed eager, yet there was a hesitancy, as if he wished to play, yet did not wish to do so. She placed the violin and bow in his hands, impulsively.

"You play. I know you do," she said. "You must give us some music. I want to be an auditor awhile, and not furnish all the entertainment."

Ralston held the violin and bow a few moments, and then placed the violin under his chin, lifted the bow, held it poised in the air an instant, and then struck the strings with the quick, firm stroke of a master, and the next moment the two were listening to such music as neither had ever heard before. Genie, who had paid one thousand dollars for her violin, it being an old Stradivarius, and who had often reveled with delight in the tones she was capable of bringing forth from the instrument, caught her breath in almost a gasp when the resonant tones of the violin fell upon her hearing, as brought forth by the man sitting beside her, whom she had not suspected of having a musical gift of any kind, much less being able to demonstrate that he was a virtuoso, a master of the instrument.

Worth and Genie listened, with wonder and delight on Genie's part, and

(Continued on page five.)

A LADY LECTURER

Feeds Nerves and Brains Scientifically.

A lady lecturer writes from Philadelphia concerning the use of right food and how she is enabled to withstand the strain and wear and tear of her arduous occupation. She says:

"Through improper food, imperfectly digested, my health was completely wrecked, and I attribute my recovery entirely to the regular use of Grape-Nuts food. It has, I assure you, proved an inestimable boon to me.

"Almost immediately after beginning the use of Grape-Nuts I found a gratifying change in my condition. The terrible weakness that formerly prostrated me after a few hours of work, was perceptibly lessened and is now only a memory—it never returns.

"Ten days after beginning on Grape-Nuts I experienced a wonderful increase in mental vigor and physical energy, and continued use has entirely freed me from the miserable insomnia and nervousness from which I used to suffer so much.

"I find Grape-Nuts very palatable and would not be without the crisp, delicious food for even a day on any consideration. Indeed, I always carry it with me on my lecture tours."

Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

* * *

A HEARTFELT SONG.

I sung of Mabel's hair,
I did,
That gold in it was meshed
And hid;
And what I sung I knew,
By Hunks!
For, oh, it cost me twen—
Ty plunks!

* * *

Free Asthma and Hay Fever Cure.

D. J. Lane, a chemist at 115 Lane Building, St. Marys, Kansas, manufactures a remedy for Asthma and Hay Fever in which he has so much confidence that he sends a $1 bottle by express to anyone who will write for it. His offer is that he is to be paid for it if it cures, and the one taking the treatment is to be the judge.

* * *

Ancestral Pride of the Future.

"One of my forefathers was a signer of the declaration of independence."

"That is something," replied Mrs. Voteby Gumm. "But think of the proud satisfaction with which my great-great-granddaughters will point to the fact that one of their foremothers was a militant suffragette."

* * *

GOVERNMENT POSITIONS OPEN

Any of our readers wishing a government posit on, should send postal immediately to Franklin Institute, Dept. N 79, Rochester, N. Y., for full list of positions open. This list shows the salaries, the duties, and tells how to get the positions.

* * *

Looking Ahead.

Proud Young Father—Isn't he a little beauty? What a pity he has that mark on his upper lip!

Proud Young Mother—Why, John, his mustache will hide that.

* * *

HAVE YOU TRIED PAXTINE

The Great Toilet Germicide?

You don't have to pay 50c or $1.00 a pint for listerian antiseptics or peroxide. You can make 16 pints of a more cleansing, germicidal, healing and deodorizing antiseptic solution with one 25c box of Paxtine,—a soluble antiseptic powder, obtainable at any drug store.

Paxtine destroys germs that cause disease, decay and odors,—that is why it is the best mouth wash and gargle, and why it purifies the breath, cleanses and preserves the teeth better than ordinary dentifrices, and in sponge bathing it completely eradicates perspiration and other disagreeable body odors. Every dainty woman appreciates this and its many other toilet and hygienic uses.

Paxtine is splendid for sore throat, inflamed eyes and to purify mouth and breath after smoking. You can get Paxtine Toilet Antiseptic at any drug store, price 25c and 50c, or by mail postpaid from The Paxton Toilet Co., Boston, Mass., who will send you a free sample if you would like to try it before buying.

* * *

No Objection.

"That's a pretty good idea of the French playwright who is willing to fight everybody who criticises him. I'd like to see our American playwrights imitate him."

"But some of them might be killed."

"Why, yes, of course."

* * *

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very, small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

(Continued from page four.)

pleasure, at least, on Worth's part, for he really loved music, and even at the hands of the second mate, the music was a revelation.

On to the end of the air went Ralston, closing with such skill in technique, combined with such volume, tone and timbre as to cause his hearers to sit there, as if spellbound, for a few moments. Then Genie exclaimed, sincerity and eagerness combined in her voice: "Oh, if I could only play like that!"

"There is no reason why you shouldn't" said Ralston. "It takes lots of practice."

"And considerable of natural talent," added the girl, with a laugh. "I fear I shall never make such music as I have listened to just now."

"I played pretty well at one time," said Ralston, a deeper note in his voice. "It is now several years since I had hold of a violin."

"Mr. Ralston, you must give me lessons," said Genie, eagerly. "You can teach me a lot about technique, and how to get the tone and volume with the bow. Will you?"

"I shall be glad to do so," was the reply, "if you wish me to."

"I do. I will take at least one lesson each day, if you can spare the time."

"I can spare the time."

"Good. We will begin tomorrow."

"Very well," said the second mate, and then played another selection, after which he returned the violin and bow to Genie, and told her to go ahead and play. She played two or three pieces, and then said good night and went to her room. The second mate said good night to Worth and went to his room, and the first mate went to look about the deck. He walked slowly, and seemed to be thinking. He hardly knew what was the matter with him. He did not feel just right, yet there was no reason that he could see why he should not feel as well as usual. He thought of the violin playing of the second mate, and instinctively seemed to realize that while the music had sounded good, yet it had not, as a matter of fact, pleased him. It was good-sounding music, but there was something lacking. However, Worth was a sensible, philosophical fellow, and he dismissed the matter from his mind, and finished up his watch, the second mate coming on at ten o'clock when the first mate went to his room.

Genie, on entering her room, placed her violin on its shelf, looked at it thoughtfully a few minutes, and then went to bed. She wondered why the second mate had quit playing the violin, when he was such a master of the instrument, and while wondering, fell asleep.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GREAT SOUTH BARRIER.

Next day Genie took a lesson in navigation from the first mate and a lesson on the violin from the second mate. The latter seemed a different man from what he had heretofore been. He had much more of animation, and became enthused, and gave Genie more instruction in the one lesson than she had received in all the lessons she had taken, especially as regards technique and bowing.

She was well pleased, and thanked him for his kindness in giving her the lesson, and said that she believed she would be able to return to New York an accomplished violinist.

"Yes, I think you will be able to acquire a finished technique in a year or so," was the reply. "I shall be glad to teach you all I know."

From that time on affairs went on pretty smoothly. The first and second mates, although not friends, were courteous to each other, and Genie, was rapidly finishing her studies in navigation, and learning more about violin-playing than she would have learned from her teacher in New York. And the steamer plowed steadily southward toward the land of ice. Slowly the weather grew colder, the farther south the Ice Queen went, and finally the steamer was opposite the lower end of South America, and about four or five hundred miles to the eastward.

"We ought to sight the Great South Barrier in another day or so," said Mr. Holman, one evening, to Genie. "We are making slow progress, because there are icebergs that might be encountered, and we don't want to run into any of them. Possibly we may sight the Ice Barrier by tomorrow afternoon."

"I hope so," said Genie. "I want to get off the ship awhile, even if it is only to get footing on ice. It will seem better, for one can travel in different directions, and not be hemmed in by the rails of the ship."

"I am eager to get to work, trying to get over the Barrier," was the reply. "It is almost like the Palisades, though much higher; and it is my intention to make a trip east or west, and try to get through a crevasse, as that would be the easiest way; and if we can't do that, we will attempt to blast steps, and gardually work our way to the top."

"Has the Barrier been surmounted, ever, dad?"

"No, not the real Barrier. The outer Barrier has been crossed, and we will be able to manage that, but the Great Barrier is much closer to the Pole, and has not been surmounted, and it will be a difficult proposition, if all that I have heard regarding its appearance is true."

"We'll get over the Barrier, dad," said Genie. "That is what we have come down here for, and we have all the materials and supplies necessary for the work. We will not fail."

"No, we will not fail, Genie," was the reply; "not if determined effort will make a success of our undertaking."

About noon next day they came in sight of the outer Barrier, and a couple of hours later the ship came to anchor in a sheltered bay of perhaps a quarter of a mile in diameter, surrounded by a wall of one hundred and fifty feet in height. The outer Barrier was solid and unchanging, and the bay was as much a permanent affair as though it were in land. The ship was anchored, so as to hold it stationary, and the fires were drawn in the furnaces, and at last the real starting point of the expedition in search of the South Pole was reached.

"We will begin unloading the sleds and supplies tomorrow," said Mr. Holman, as he and Genie were eating supper. "Then we will hunt for an easy place to make the ascent of the wall of the Barrier, and will then be on a plateau, with a stretch of three or four hundred miles ahead of us."

"And then, what, dad—the Great Barrier?"

"Yes. Then we will come to the Great Barrier, the point where all expeditions heretofore sent to this region have been forced to stop."

"But we won't stop there, dad," said Genie, her eyes sparkling. "We will climb the Great Barrier and continue onward to the Pole."

"I hope that we shall succeed, Genie. I have always believed that there might be much more interesting formations of a geological nature in the vicinity of the South Pole, than in the vicinity of the North Pole, but most of the Arctic research has been in the Northern district. I shall not be satisfied, at any rate, until I have gotten a look at what lies south of the Great Barrier, for it is possible that there might be a small continent there, and to discover a new continent at this age of the world, when all the lands of the world have been looked upon as having been discovered, would be to place one's name on record in the History of the World."

"That would be nice, and I want that we shall succeed. I believe that we will, too."

Next morning the work of getting the supplies out of the ship, and around onto the level ice in front of the Barrier, was begun. This work took pretty much the whole day, and the members of the expedition remained on shipboard that night again.

"In the morning we will make the ascent of the Barrier," said Mr. Holman, "and then will begin the journey across the plateau."

The party set out, as Mr. Holman had said, early next morning. All went, with the exception of two men who remained to guard the ship, and the sleds, loaded down with provisions and supplies, were dragged by the sailors, this not being difficult, owing to the smoothness of the ice.

At the head of the expedition walked Mr. Holman and Genie, and behind them were the first and second mates. Back of them came the sailors, drawing the sleds. They made their way slowly, for there was no hurry. Mr. Holman had supplies and provisions to last a year, at least, and they would be able to reach the Great Barrier, surmount it and find the Pole, before such a lot of provisions should be exhausted.

About noon they paused and ate lunch, after which they rested half an hour or so, and again proceeded in an easterly direction, along the face of the wall, looking for a place to climb over the Barrier.

That evening, about half-past four o'clock, they found a place where they could make the ascent, and did so, and found themselves on a plateau, which extended ahead as far as they could see, smooth, almost as ice that has been frozen on top of water.

The weather was cold, but the members of the party were warmly dressed, and did not suffer much inconvenience, and they advanced about five miles on the plateau before they went into camp for the night.

They built fires, and cooked their suppers, after which they ate, and then the men smoked, while Genie sat beside her father and looked into the fire and dreamed—of planting the American flag at the South Pole, perhaps. Who shall say?

Next morning they resumed their journey across the plateau, and at the end of the fifth day came in sight of the Great Barrier. Far to the southward it loomed, looking like a mountain range, with almost an even surface, but seemingly only about the height of the outer Barrier.

"It is of an average height of about a thousand feet," said Mr. Holman, as they were eating supper. "And it has never been surmounted, so we will soon have a chance to make a record for our expedition. When we reach the foot of the Barrier, we will be equal to any former expedition; when we climb the Barrier, we will be ahead of any other expedition."

"And we'll climb the Great Barrier, too, dad," said Genie.

"We'll do our best, at any rate," was the reply. "How do you feel by this time? Do you think you can stand the fatigue of the trip to the Pole, from your experience so far?"

"I never felt better or stronger in my life, dad. I am enjoying this trip, and that is the truth. I think Antarctic research is about the most interesting work that I have ever done."

"I'm glad that you like it, and that you are feeling well."

Genie had not brought her violin, as she would not have any use for it while making the trip to the Pole, and it would be too cold to play, anyway; so she could not continue her lessons on the instrument, nor was she taking lessons in navigation now. That was to be left till they returned to the ship.

The Great Barrier was about thirty miles distant, and they reached the foot of it the next evening, and went into camp. Above them loomed the great wall of solid ice, a thousand feet in height, at least. Beyond it lay—what? A continent, perhaps. Perhaps only another level plateau of ice, with the Pole within reach.

On the morrow would begin the attempt to climb the Great South Barrier.

CHAPTER VII.

A VOLCANIC ISLAND.

Next morning, as soon as they had eaten, the explorers set out along the face of the wall, to look for a place that would be easy of ascent. They traveled at a moderate rate, and looked for a point where the face of the wall would not be perpendicular. If they could find a slanting place, it would be much easier to make the ascent.

Soon after luncheon, they came upon a point where they could make the ascent, by chopping steps, and they set to work. The wall slanted inward at an angle that made it possible to work their way upward at a fairly rapid rate, and by evening they had reached the top of the Great South Barrier.

They looked across the plateau that was revealed to their view, and saw that it was fairly level, like the one below, and they figured that they would be able to reach the South Pole in a few days.

They went into camp, as it was evening, and rested well that night, for they felt well satisfied with their progress, so far. When morning came, they got ready, and again set out, and went about twenty-five miles, that day, and about the same distance the next, and the next, and then they met with a great surprise. They came to a point where the plateau ended; but it did not end in a perpendicular wall, like a precipice, but sloped away toward the south. And what surprised them most was, that the ice showed that it was in a melting condition, there being moisture on the surface. The explorers now knew why it was that during the past day they had felt the air growing warmer and warmer. They had struck a region that was so warm it was almost tropical, yet the heat did not come from the sun, but from hot geysers in the water, and possibly from hot lava near the surface on the islands that they saw lying before them, not more than a mile or so distant, for there were islands there—wooded islands, the trees being fully leaved, and looking cool and inviting. For it was so warm at the brink of the plateau that the coolness of the trees on the islands did not seem unpleasant.

The members of the party, after reaching the point and catching a glimpse of the island and the open water between, stood there, looking at the scene in silence for a few minutes. It was something they had not expected. This made it all the more pleasing to look at. And that they were eager to get across onto the islands may well be supposed. The only question was, How were they to get there?

This was a problem, for the reason that they had no boats. They had not really expected to find open water near the Pole, so were not prepared to traverse the mile or so of water. They talked awhile, discussing the scene before them with interest, and then went back about a quarter of a mile and went into camp.

"We'll decide on some plan for getting across to the nearest island, tonight," said Mr. Holman. "It think that possibly we may be able to manufacture a boat of some kind, by knocking two or three of the sleds to pieces and using the boards. We'll see about it in the morning."

They cooked and ate supper, and then sat around the fire and talked an hour or two, after which they lay down and were soon asleep. All were resting easy, sleeping soundly, when suddenly, and without any previous warning there came an upheaval of the ice, breaking the immense plateau in two with a cracking, rending sound. The cracks, several in number, extended in various directions, and large chunks of the plateau, being in fact what might now be termed icebergs, went whirling in different directions, and the members of the exploring party were divided into three or four small parties. In fact, several of the members, having been near where the plateau parted, fell and went rolling downward. Among these were Worth, the first mate, and Genie Holman, and the first the girl knew, she was struggling in water that, while not icy cold, was so cold as to make her gasp for breath. Then she went

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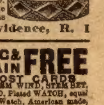

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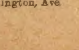

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under, and came up again a few minutes later, coughing and almost strangled. She would have sunk again, but for the fact that she was seized by strong hands and her head held above the water.

"Courage," said a voice in her ear. "Have no fear. We will escape in safety."

It was Richard Worth, for he had been near enough when Genie rose to seize her, and now he swam straight ahead, eager to get away from the swaying mountains of ice that were all around them. It was light enough, so that he could see fairly well, and he managed to make his way onward, going between the icebergs, and finally he reached open water.

"We will be all right, now, Genie," said Worth. "I think we shall be able to reach one of the islands without much trouble. Rest your weight on my arm. I am a strong and expert swimmer."

"I—wonder—if the rest—escaped?" said Genie. "My father—I am anxious—about—him."

"They are probably all right. We escaped, so it is likely that they did. In fact, I think that only a few dropped into the water."

"What caused—the—breaking up—of the ice?" asked the girl.

"I don't know—unless there is a volcano underneath where we were encamped. The hot geysers that have kept the water warm and the ice melted, proves that there are volcanos underneath, and the islands are of volcanic origin."

"I hope that the men that fell into the water when we did escaped, and that father did not fall off the top of the iceberg."

"I think your father escaped, Genie. Don't worry."

As they moved through the water, it grew warmer and warmer, and presently an island loomed up before them. Toward the shore headed Worth, and presently it was reached, and the two scrambled up the sloping shore till they were at the edge of the timber, where they sank down, almost exhausted. They strained their gaze across the water, toward the spot where the icebergs were, and tried to see them, but could not.

"Are you cold?" asked Worth, presently.

"No," was the reply. "I am not cold, but feel anything but comfortable. It isn't pleasant to be wet."

"Let me put my coat around you," said Worth, but the girl said "no," that she was not going to catch cold, and that he would be cold himself if he let her have his coat for a wrap.

He did not insist, but presently, when he heard the girl's teeth begin to chatter, as was the case, the blood chilling, owing to the air being colder than the water, Worth said to her: "You are getting cold, and may catch cold. Let us place our backs together and that will help us to keep warm."

Without waiting for an answer, Worth rose and seated himself close to the girl, and placed his back against her back, thus affording her something to lean against, and gradually warming the damp clothing that was between them, till presently both felt much warmer and more comfortable.

"I'm not so cold now," said Genie, presently. "I'm glad you thought of this plan, for I was pretty cold."

"I shall be glad when morning comes," said Worth. "Then we can dry our clothing in the sun, and will feel much more comfortable."

"Yes, indeed," said Genie. "And perhaps we may be able to fix up some kind of a raft, and get back to where the other members of the party are."

"Perhaps so."

They did not talk much after that, and both must have fallen into a sort of doze, for they seemed only semi-conscious, about the only consciousness being that of a slight cold, for quite awhile, and were aroused when the sun arose.

"I don't know what we shall do for a fire," said Worth, after they had risen and stirred about a little; "I have no matches."

"Nor have I. I wish we had a fire."

"And some food," said Worth, with rather a rueful smile.

"I'm kind of hungry, sure enough, now that I think of it," replied the girl.

They discussed the situation, and gradually as they grew warmer, they grew more comfortable, and presently were feeling fairly well, excepting for the fact that they were hungry.

They could see no signs of the icebergs that had been created by the parting of the ice plateau, but in their place, to their amazement, was the top of what was undoubtedly an island. It was seemingly about the size of the one they were on, but was bare of trees or vegetation, and it showed very plainly that it was of volcanic origin, because the top was covered with the molten lava.

"I don't like the looks of affairs," said Genie, a sober look on her face. "I see nothing of the rest of the party, and I am afraid that father may have lost his life."

"I don't think so, Genie," was the reply. "He is probably safe, but they are back further on the plateau."

"I hope so," was the reply.

Two or three hours passed, and then they caught sight of several good-sized objects floating on the water, between the island they were on and the new one that had just risen out of the water, and after a searching glance, Worth said:

"There are three of the sleds, and they are laden with boxes of food and other supplies, and if we can get them ashore here, we will have plenty to eat, and will find matches with which to start a fire, and can be fairly comfortable, for awhile at least. Likely we will be joined soon by your father and the others."

"Yes, yes," said Genie, her eyes shining. "I am glad that there is a prospect of our getting something to eat soon, anyway, for I am getting hungry."

"So am I."

They waited, and to their delight the three sleds gradually floated closer and closer, till at last they were close to the shore, and Worth waded in and pulled the sleds to the shore, and up on the ground, to a distance of fifteen or twenty feet.

"Here we will find food in plenty," he said, and proceeded to open a box that contained a variety of provisions. "I'll build a fire now," he went on, "as here are matches. You may be selecting such of the food as you like best, and we will soon have breakfast."

"It will be a little late," said Genie, "but it will be very acceptable."

"Yes, indeed."

Worth quickly built a fire, and Genie warmed some of the canned food, and Worth opened the cans, the contents of which, with bread, of which there was plenty, made a breakfast that they afterward remembered as being perhaps the most enjoyable they had ever eaten.

They were destined to eat many more breakfasts together, there on the litte volcanic island of the Antarctic Ocean, south of the Great South Barrier. Worth, with his Antarctic experience to remember, wondered if they would ever get back across the Great South Barrier. Somehow he had doubts regarding the matter, for he reasoned that if the other members of the party had escaped, something would have been seen of them, over on the plateau, to the right or to the left of the new island. And if they had perished, he had some doubts regarding the ability of Genie and himself to get back to the steamship. He did not say anything regarding his fears, however. Genie was worried enough as it was.

CHAPTER VIII.

ANXIOUS THOUGHTS.

After they had eaten, Worth got an ax and said to Genie: "We may have to stay here quite awhile, and so had better have some kind of shelter. Come with me and select a site."

Genie looked at Worth quickly, a startled light in her eyes. "Do you—think that—necessary?" she asked. "Surely father will be here soon, with the others, and we will be taken off the island."

"I hope that such will be the case," was the reply. "But it will give me something to do, the building of a sort of shelter, and I would as soon be at work as sitting doing nothing. And if they should be delayed a few days, we will be more comfortable than if we had no shelter."

"True, but I hope that we won't have to make use of the shelter. I expect the rest of the members of the party to appear at any moment."

The shore sloped upward perhaps one hundred and fifty yards, and then came to an end there being a sort of plateau of perhaps two or three hundred acres in extent, covered with a heavy growth of timber and underbrush. At the edge of the plateau was an open spot, and here Worth proceeded to build a cabin, Genie having accompanied him there. She sat down on a fallen tree and watched the first mate while he chopped down, one after another, trees of perhaps six inches in diameter, and cut them into lengths of about twelve feet.

"Those will be pretty heavy to handle, will they not?" asked Genie, presently.

"Yes," was the reply, "but with you to help me, I guess I can get them in place."

Genie smiled, and looked at her hands somewhat skeptically. "I don't know about that," she said. "I'm not very muscular; still, I'll help all I can."

"You will be able to assist me considerably. And as the walls grow higher, I shall cut the logs smaller, so that we will be able to get them in place. We won't need a very strong cabin, or one built for warmth, for the air, I judge, never gets cold here, owing to the fact that the warmth comes from the heat thrown up into the atmosphere by the hot water from the geysers."

"I judge you are right," said Genie. "But I hope we won't have to stay very long."

"Likely we won't. Still, it is best to be prepared to take comfort as best we can."

Genie divided her time between watching Worth and looking across the water, but the other members of the party did not come in sight, and they ate luncheon, talking as they did so, and wondering what had become of the others. The mate tried to make Genie believe that they were safe, that they had likely drifted out into the open sea, the plateau having been rent asunder clear across its width, and it might be several days before they would put in an appearance.

He cut a lot of trees down, during the afternoon, and cut them into the proper lengths, and when evening came, he was pretty tired, but felt well, and ate a hearty supper, Genie, however, not seeming to have much appetite. As the semi-darkness of the evening came on, and there were no signs of the other members of the party, the girl sighed and looked down in the mouth and disappointed.

"Perhaps they will come tomorrow," she said, presently.

"Possibly," was the reply.

There were sleeping robes, and blankets in plenty on the sleds, so they had no difficulty in fixing themselves so that they were comfortable for the night, and they lay in a sheltered spot, where the foliage above them kept off the moisture. They slept soundly, and next morning as soon as they had breakfasted, Worth set to work again, and chopped energetically till noon, when he had cut a sufficient number of logs to make the walls.

"This afternoon we will begin laying the walls," he said. "By tomorrow we should have the cabin done."

They went to work presently, and by evening had laid up a sufficient number of logs, so that the walls were about six feet high.

"We will finish tomorrow," said Worth. "I'm tired and am eager for another good night's rest."

"I slept very well last night," said Genie. "But, I'm beginning to feel quite anxious regarding my father and the other members of the party. I hope they will show up tomorrow."

That night passed quietly, and next day they finished the cabin and had a roof on it by evening, so that they would be sheltered from the moisture. Genie had watched all day for some signs of her father and the other members of the party, but they had not put in an appearance. She had not seemed to be in a very cheerful state of mind that day, but had been sober and quiet, having spoken only when spoken to, and then her answers were mostly in monosyllables and without much animation. In fact, it almost seemed that she was out of humor, for some reason or other, with Worth. He had noticed it, but did not pay any attention to it, for he realized that she was worried about her father, and he thought she would probably brigthen up in a day or two, whether her father appeared or not, for she was a sensible girl, and would wait patiently for the appearance of Mr. Holman and the others, realizing that if they had been carried out to sea on an iceberg it might be sometime before they could get back to where she and Worth were.

Next morning, they were up early, and ate breakfast, and Genie was still as silent as before. Worth talked to her, but received brief replies. She was pleasant enough, but did not have anything to say, except in answer to his remarks, and while he did not like to acknowledge it even to himself, the girls' manner toward him and her talk and actions gave him a slight feeling of dissatisfaction. He did not think of her except as a friend, but simply realized

(Continued on page fifteen.)

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CHAPTER IX.

AS THE weeks passed on, the more Myrene saw of Michael Desmond the more cordially did she dislike him, for she soon discovered that her first estimation of his character had been correct, and that he possessed a mean, sordid nature, together with an overbearing, bullying disposition. If he had been content to leave her to her own devices, the girl would have found his presence less irksome, but this was exactly what the Australian had no intention of doing.

He diplomatically told himself that if there were any doubt as to the manner in which the elder Miss St. Quentin would dispose of her property he would strengthen his position by securing Myrene for his wife; consequently, he insisted upon paying her attentions, though they were at once odious and repulsive to her.

Desmond was not popular in the village, for the story of his cowardice had leaked out; moreover, his swaggering, bullying ways were much resented by the independent country folk. On the other hand, Denis' bravery in volunteering for the lifeboat had gone a long way towards constituting him a hero in the eyes of the villagers, and many an honest yeoman was heard to remark over a glass of cider at the Rising Sun that the imposter was worth ten such men as the real Michael Desmond.

As for poor Miss St. Quentin, the discovery that Denis was not her nephew was a bitter blow, for during the short time he was at the Abbey the young man had greatly endeared himself to her; in fact, she had grown to love him in a motherly fashion, not merely for her dead sister's sake, but for his own. The rough, discourteous manners of the Australian grated upon the frail old lady's sensitive nerves, and she began at length to dread the very sound of his harsh, rough voice.

The newcomer was too much afraid of risking the loss of the Abbey to be downright rude to his aunt, but his ungraciousness, impatience and ill concealed sneers at her gentle, simple ways often caused Myrene much indignation.

"I know it is very wicked of me, my dear, but I fear that I shall never feel any affection for that young man," remarked Miss Lucinda one day to Myrene, as her nephew's raucous voice was heard in the garden abusing one of the grooms for some fancied neglect of his horse. "He certainly does not take after my sainted sister, but resembles his dreadful father in every way," she continued pathetically.

The two ladies were seated by the fire in the big hall and were sheltered from all possible draught by a handsomely carved Egyptian screen.

"I am sure you need not feel wicked about it, dear; my cousin is scarcely a person to inspire one with any feeling of love," replied the girl. "As for myself, I cordially detest the man," she added.

"Ah, then you will never allow him to persuade you to become his wife?" said the old lady, eagerly. "I know he must seem handsome and fascinating to a young girl, but I do not think he would make any woman a good husband."

"You need have no fears on that score, auntie dear. Nothing would ever induce me to marry him," said Myrene, decidedly.

"He pays you considerable attention," ventured the elder lady again.

"His attentions nauseate me!" declared her companion.

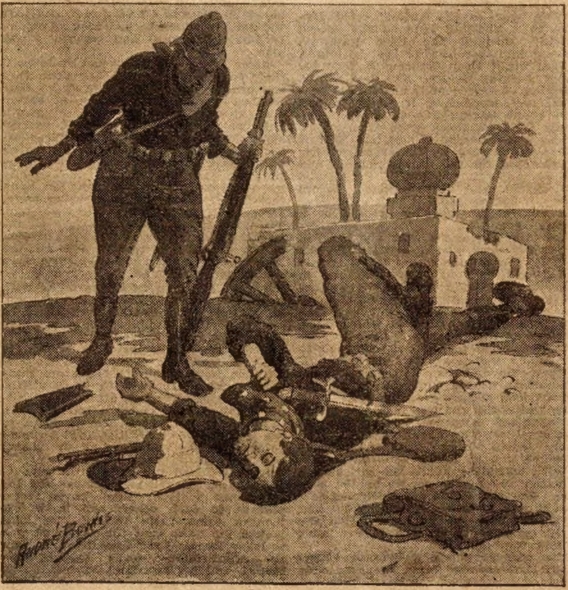
"It is only natural, perhaps, that he has fallen in love with you," remarked Miss St. Quentin, regarding her lovely niece anxiously, as she tried to grasp the situation.

"Love! Bah! Love and he are as far apart as the poles! There is no question of love in the matter. He merely wishes to secure a rich wife!" retorted the girl contemptuously.

Miss St. Quentin was silent for a moment; then she said hesitatingly: "I dislike to repeat gossip, as you know, but Mrs. Leander tells me that Michael is frequently to be seen about with that bold girl Thomasina Pedder. Is there any truth in this?"

"I have seen them together," replied Myrene, indifferently.

"Oh, my dear, I hope he will not create a scandal! If he would only return to Australia! How long do you think he intends to remain here?" asked the old lady anxiously.



"Barry, my poor fellow!"

"I fear he has no intentions of going back yet. You see, you invited him for an indefinite period," the girl reminded her gently.

"I know, I know! But I thought Mary's boy would be so different. Oh, Myrene, do not think me foolish, but if only the imposter had been the real Michael Desmond! You cannot think how attached I became to that young man, although it was dreadfully wicked of him to deceive us all in the manner he did. I assure you I often lie awake half the night wondering what has become of him. I cannot bear to think that perhaps he is ill and starving."

"Don't, auntie, please," exclaimed Myrene.

"You loved him too, dearie? Well, I do not blame you, for his was a thoroughly lovable nature. It is difficult to believe that he was merely an adventurer, leading a life of fraud."

"I can never believe that!" declared Myrene indignantly. "It was all Barry's fault and mine; for I put the idea into Barry's head by asking him if his master was my cousin, Michael Desmond. Mr. O'Hara attempted several times to confess to me who he really was, but something always occurred to prevent it. Oh, auntie, you should have seen him that night so cheerfully risking his life in that awful sea! He did not hesitate a moment, but seemed to think it was all part and parcel of the day's work!" she added, with eyes full of enthusiasm.

"Yes, the villagers are loud in his praises, I know. Why could not I have had a brave man like that for my nephew instead of this coward?" Miss St. Quentin demanded in an injured tone. Then, after a moment's hesitation, she said abruptly: "I shall alter my will. I shall leave the Abbey to you, Myrene!"

"Aunt Lucinda!" ejaculated the girl, regarding her relative in genuine astonishment.

"Yes; why should I leave my property to a man I dislike? I shall send for Mr. Merton tomorrow. Gracious, child! What was that?" she exclaimed in alarm as a slight sound was heard on the other side of the screen.

Myrene rose and peeped behind it, where she saw, somewhat to her amusement, Michael Desmond's tall figure stealing softly away.

So he had been eavesdropping? Well, so much the better, for now he would thoroughly understand the state of his relatives' feelings towards him, and might perhaps amend his manners or leave the Abbey.

"What is it? Who is there?" inquired Miss St. Quentin anxiously.

"There is no one there now," replied Myrene truthfully, as she returned to the fire. "Now, auntie, dear, you must do nothing in a hurry. Remember, that after all, Michael is your dear sister's son, and that I am fortunately, well provided for and do not need the Abbey."

That afternoon, as Myrene was returning from Lyndale, where she had been to see a friend, Michael Desmond overtook her.

"Why do you avoid me, cousin?" he asked abruptly, as he regulated his pace to hers.

"I was not aware that you particularly desired my company," she replied, coldly and evasively.

"You cannot be so blind as you would have me suppose. You must know that although you are so cruel to me, I am your devoted slave," said the man in a low, earnest tone.

"Indeed? I cannot imagine your being any one's slave!" remarked Myrene in a tone of amusement.

"Nevertheless, I am yours. Myrene, do not play with me! I love you! Will you be my wife?" he asked anxiously, trying to obtain a glimpse of her averted face.

The girl was silent for a moment, as if deliberating what answer to make to her companion's request; then she said slowly, looking him in the face—

slowly, looking him in the face:

now that I avoided you, you spoke the truth. I have avoided you. It seems an unpardonably rude thing to say, but the impatient, sneering manner that you adopt towards my aunt has caused me to dislike you exceedingly. Therefore you will perfectly understand that there can be no question of marriage between us."

"You mean to say that you refuse me?" said Desmond, his face turning very pale.

"That is exactly what I do mean," replied Myrene composedly.

"I will not accept your refusal! You shall be my wife!" he cried fiercely, gripping her arm with unconscious violence.

"Indeed? By what means do you intend to compel me?" inquired the girl with a faint smile.

"I shall be such a persistent wooer that you will marry me at last in sheer desperation to rid yourself of my impor-

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Isn't it queer how many idle friends an industrious man has?

Anyway, a woman's tears float her out of a lot of difficulties.

The collector of the "wages of sin" is never turned away empty handed.

It is said that man's secretiveness is responsible for woman's curiosity.

Figures may not lie, but sometimes a shoe dealer uses them to deceive.

She is a bold girl who will attempt to sit on a weak-kneed young man.

The best way to induce people to respect your advice is to keep it to yourself.

Bad habits cost money, but there are men who seem to think them worth the price.

As a matter of fact a lot of people have no use for you because they can't use you.

It pays to be honest—but it is not always possible to name the one who gets the pay.

A count may be no account, but if a girl has more dollars than sense—well, it's none of our business.

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In Berlin piano playing is prohibited after a certain hour. In this country some people's piano playing should be prohibited at all hours.

Even if a woman is sorry she married a man, she finds some consolation in the belief that she kept some other woman from getting him.

(Continued from page seven.)

tunities," was the dogged reply he made. "That would be the very last thing I should do. Besides, such a method is scarcely one by which to win a girl's love."

"I believe you are still in love with that impostor, but it is useless to think of him, as the fellow will soon be serving a term of penal servitude," remarked Desmond darkly.

"What do you mean?" demanded Myrene.

"Merely that I have put detectives on his track," the man replied coolly. "You see, so many valuable things disappeared whilst he was here that it was clearly my duty to do so," he continued, watching her face narrowly.

"How dare you!" cried Myrene as she clenched her little hands together in impotent anger, her eyes flashing.

"You do not approve of what I have done?" he asked in feigned surprise.

"You know very well that I do not. You must stop all proceedings against him at once."

"I will do so on one condition only," he said slowly.

"What is that?" she demanded suspiciously.

"That you promise to be my wife!" was the reply.

"Coward! Do you think to force me into a hateful marriage by threats?" was the contemptuous retort.

"You will be sorry some day that you have adopted this insolent tone towards me," said the man menacingly. "Is it to be war between us, then?" he added, as they had by this time reached the Abbey.

"Yes, war to the knife!" cried Myrene in a thrilling tone as she passed quickly through the ivied gateway, leaving him to follow as best he might.

That night sleep deserted Myrene for many lagging hours. She lay awake thinking of her cousin's unwelcome proposal and, wondering if what he had said about having put detectives upon Denis O'Hara's track were true.

The girl thought it possible that it had been merely an idle ruse, as her heart ached for the poor wanderer, and she fervently hoped that the man she still loved had left England before this. At length she fell into a troubled slumber interspersed by dreams of a terrifying nature.

She dreamt finally that she was in her aunt's room, and that whilst the old lady lay peacefully asleep black shapes and forms hovered round the bed in menacing attitudes. Suddenly one fearful, ghoulish creature, bigger and more dreadful than the rest, bent over the bed with uplifted hand in which some terrible ax-like weapon gleamed.

Myrene tried to cry out and rush to her aunt's assistance, but she could do neither. Slowly but surely the awful hand descended; nearer and nearer to the unconscious sleeper drew the impending fate, whilst the girl was forced to watch in agonized suspense. Then, just as the cruel ax was about to cleave the poor lady's head asunder. Myrene shrieked out in terror and—awoke!

With trembling hands the girl struck a match and lit the candle by the bedside. She glanced at her clock and saw that it was just two o'clock. What had awakened her? she wondered. Had she really cried out, or was it her aunt calling for help?

The girl sat up and listened attentively, but nothing could she hear save the loud beating of her heart. Supposing the dream were a warning and her aunt were really in danger? It might be that she was ill and required her niece's assistance, for she suffered from a weak heart, and sudden attacks of palpitation were liable to come on at any moment.

Without further hesitation Myrene sprang out of bed, and, taking the candle in her hand, proceeded down the passage towards Miss St. Quentin's room. She had scarcely gone a few yards, however, when, to her amazement and horror, she saw a tall, white, shadowy figure emerge from her aunt's room and disappear silently down the corridor.

For a moment the girl was too paralyzed with terror to move, for, although she could not see the face of the intruder, she felt it to be nothing more nor less than the ghost which was supposed to haunt the Abbey. Then in a flash came the thought of the poor old lady's possible danger, and, stimulated by fear of this, she dashed bravely along the passage and into her aunt's room.

To her relief she found her relative sleeping peacefully. Glancing hastily round the apartment, she saw that nothing had been disturbed. Could it have been her nervous fancy that had conjured up the terrible apparition she had just seen?

Upon the table by the bedside stood a glass of milk in readiness should Miss St. Quentin require some nourishment during the night. What possessed the girl she could not tell, but she suddenly took up the tumbler and smelt the contents. A faint, sickly odor of almonds immediately assailed her nostrils.

Merciful heavens! Could it be possible that the milk had been tampered with?

No, no! Much as she disliked the man, she could not believe that Michael Desmond would be wicked enough to be guilty of so heinous a crime as trying to poison his aunt. And yet had he not overheard her saying that she intended altering her will? It was humanely conceivable that the beverage had "turned" during the night. In any case it was not fit to drink and Myrene decided to take the glass to her own room and throw the contents out of the window.

Satisfied that her aunt was in no immediate danger and beginning to think that perhaps after all the shadowy form she had seen had been merely a phantom of her imagination, the girl retired to her room in a much calmer state of mind.

The following day Mr. Merton, the lawyer, came over from Lyndale, at Miss St. Quentin's request, and discussed business matters with the old lady for a considerable length of time.

CHAPTER X.

The battle was just over, the enemy fleeing in every direction. All around amid the rank grass and stunted thorn bushes lay brave soldiers wounded or dead. It was evident that the victory had not been gained without much loss of life, for the ambulance parties were doing good work tending the sufferers, and quickly moving them by stretcher or wagon to the improvised hospital tents.

When Denis O'Hara opened his eyes—he had fainted from the pain caused by a wound in the arm—he could scarcely realize where he was or be sure that the recent terrible battle with the mad, shrieking fanatics had not been merely an awful nightmare. Then, as his senses gradually returned, he remembered that it was all very real, and that the fight to which he had been so eagerly looking forward had actually taken place.

After Denis and Barry had made good their escape from the Abbey upon that memorable December morning, they reached the railway station in safety and thence journeyed to Plymouth without further adventure. It seemed as if the fates had indeed conspired together against poor Denis in his search for honest employment, and were determined that his run of ill luck should not yet reach its termination; for, upon arriving at the busy west country town, further disappointment awaited him. The uncle to whom he had originally intended to apply for assistance had died a few weeks previously, and all the hopes he had built upon that score were dashed to the ground.

So, one day, utterly disheartened with the futile effort to procure a situation, he walked into the nearest barracks and took the King's shilling in sheer desperation. Naturally Barry was determined to share his master's fortunes for weal or woe, and consequently he lost no time in enlisting in the same regiment, which happened to be a distinguished one. Finally, although a soldiers' lot is not exactly a bed of roses, both young men soon settled down to the routine of barrack life with a cheerfulness characteristic of their warm, impulsive Celtic nature.

If they found the daily drills monotonous, and the courses of musketry instructions tedious, they never complained to each other, and in a few months came their reward—the long looked for news that the regiment was to leave England for Somaliland, to join the expeditionary force against the Mullah and his fanatical hordes.

Both the young soldiers were overjoyed at the idea of active service, and they left England feeling much elated to think that the chance for which many men had waited years had come to them at the very commencement of their martial career. On the arrival of the troops at Bobette all were sent to the front except five hundred men left to garrison that place, Denis and Barry fortunately being amongst the former.

The march, at the worst time of the year, through the hot and waterless tract of country, was a very trying one, and for many miles it lay along the sandy bed of a dry river inclosed by small hills, which rigorously excluded any breeze. Further, they found that the Mullah had swept the country of cattle and left little behind for the expeditionary force to loot, making transport all the more difficult. Added to this, rations ran short, especially for the animals, and sickness was very prevalent among the troops.

At length, to Denis O'Hara's relief, the company to which he and Barry belonged was sent out some miles to reconnoiter the country, and upon suddenly encountering a large number of the enemy, the Colonel decided to make a stand in an open space on the fringe of the bush, with the result that a sharp skirmish, followed by the flight of the rebels, took place.

With the return of his senses Denis experienced a sudden painful shock—where was Barry? Why was not his faithful friend by his side, ministering to him? An awful thought suggested itself, and, hastily binding a handkerchief round his wound, he staggered to his feet and walked unsteadily toward the ambulance tents.

Upon making inquiries he found that Barry was not among the wounded, and then, weak and giddy, and with trembling limbs, the young man sought for his dearly loved comrade among that

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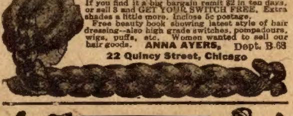

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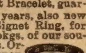

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dreadful row of rigid, stiffening forms.

To his relief, not one of the ghastly objects which lay revertently covered from curious gaze bore any resemblance to Barry, and so, turning away, the young man made his way slowly and with obvious exertion towards the bush, for there were yet many poor fellows who had not been found, and who were afterward brought in by the Red Cross Samaritans.

He discovered him at length, lying desperately wounded amongst some tangled undergrowth, his white face turned up towards the sky, with a look of agony upon it that filled his master's heart with despair. In a moment he was on the ground beside the injured man, tenderly supporting his head against his knees.

"Barry, my poor fellow! I have been looking everywhere for you. It breaks my heart to find you in this sorry plight!" murmured Denis in a tone of genuine concern.

"Is that yerself at last, Master Denis? Thank Heaven I see ye once again afore I die," he muttered faintly.

"You mustn't talk of dying, dear old friend—the only true friend I have in the world," said Denis brokenly, whilst a mist seemed to float before his eyes. "I'll go back at once and send a stretcher for you—the bearers are not far off."

"Don't lave me—for the love of Heaven sir! Let me die in pace. It won't do any good moving me, and the pain is—just cruel!" gasped Barry between his set teeth.

Denis hastily produced his water bottle and held it to the wounded man's lips; he drank the warm and not very palatable liquid eagerly.

"Heaven bless ye!" he murmured thankfully. "It puts fresh life into me. It's not denying yerself ye are, Master Denis, darlin'?" he gasped anxiously.

"No, no, my poor fellow! I—I have plenty," replied his master in so truthful a tone that Barry believed him and was content.

For a moment Barry lay so still that Denis thought he had passed away, and an awful sense of misery and desolation stole over him; then the former said suddenly and in a stronger voice: "Whin ye go back to England—an' marry Miss Myrene—ye'll tell the little black-eyed colleen that I was true to her, won't ye, sir?"

"She shall have your message if I ever return to England," replied Denis sadly.

"I got ye into a mess wid my romancing at the Abbey, an' ye was very patient wid me, but I only did it out o' love for you. Master Denis—do ye forgive me?"

"Oh, Barry, Barry. You'll break my heart! I can't let you die without making an effort to save your life! Come, for my sake be brave and let me carry you to the camp!" said Denis persuasively.

The wounded man demurred at first, but, seeing that his master so earnestly desired it, he resolved to bear without flinching, the awful agony the slighest movement would cause him to endure. Denis then lifted his faithful companion from the ground and staggered painfully with his heavy burden toward the hospital tents. He had no idea how weak and ill he was himself until he began to walk; moreover Barry, who had fainted with pain upon being moved, lay a dead weight in his arms.

The brave fellow had not proceeded far, however, when a shot whizzed past his head, and, to his dismay, he saw several of the enemy lurking in ambush amongst the thick growth of bamboo. Nevertheless he was determined to continue his perilous journey or die in the attempt; in fact, the idea of leaving Barry to his fate and saving his own life never entered his head.

The bullets were soon playing round him in unpleasant proximity, stirring up little rivers of sand at his feet, whilst one actually passed through the top of his helmet; but Denis kept pluckily on, with a dogged determination that filled the hearts of the officers and men, who were anxiously watching him from afar, with deep admiration. A party was immediately sent to his assistance, but, alas, ere it could reach the spot, the gallant young soldier had sunk to the ground with his burden, having received a bullet in the thigh.

After all, Denis and Barry did not die, although their wounds were of so serious a nature as to necessitate their remaining in the hospital for many many months.

It was during the tedious state of convalescence which followed that Denis, while idly scanning the pages of an old newspaper lent to him by a comrade, saw to his astonishment an advertisement relating to himself.

The paragraph stated that Denis O'Hara, Esquire, late of Ballyhankish Castle, County ————, Ireland, was earnestly requested to communicate with his solicitors, and in so doing would hear of something greatly to his advantage. The young man was naturally eager to know the meaning of the advertisement, which he and Barry puzzled over and discussed for many an hour.

Barry suggested that perhaps after all the widow and her son had been proved to be merely impostors, whilst Denis thought it possible that another will had been discovered in which some small provision had been made for him. Anyway, the subject gave them a constant topic of conversation.

In course of time the young men were medically surveyed, and, to their delight—for they had grown weary of the country—were both found physically unfit for further active service and were invalided home to England.

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

ORIGIN OF WHEAT.

Thirty years ago De Candole said the question of the origin of cultivated plants was of importance not only to agriculturists and botanists, but to historians, philosophers and all who are interested in the birth and development of civilization, says a writer in the Philadelphia Record.

The father of history, Herodotus, Homer, Djodorous of Sicily and others who lived in the age when mythical deities ruled the minds of people, always attributed to some god the task of having taught them the uses of plants. At one time and in one nation it was Isis and Osiris; at another, Ceres, or Demeter of Triptolemus—but never a thought was given to man's own ingenuity or to his own need as the reason for cultivation. This shows that the cultivation of plants goes back to very ancient times, for when these legends formulated all recollection of the real origin of cultivation had long since vanished.

As the races developed the love of legend was replaced by the desire for truth and in the beginning of the nineteenth century the study of natural science had advanced to such a stage that people demanded facts based on scientific observation. So we find many well-known botanists writing about the ancient history of wheat and barley and other common articles of food.

First comes the ingenious theory of Count Solms-Laubach, who, while admitting that wheat was cultivated in Egypt at least 4,000 years before the Christian era and at least 3,000 years before the same era in China, he reaches the conclusion that the cultivation of wheat must have begun in an age so remote that the division of land and sea, the climatic conditions, etc., were very different from those of today.

Recent discoveries by the Department of Agriculture through its agents in Palestine would indicate that wheat was cultivated and eaten in some form of bread in western Asia in the region of the Euphrates at least 4,000 B. C. The Euphrates Valley lies nearly in the middle of the belt of cultivation which formerly extended from China to the Canaries, and, according to many authorities, it is more than probable that this valley was the first place in which wheat was grown in very early prehistoric times. The Euprhates River is the stream referred to in the Scriptures as the river on which Babylon was built and also as the boundary of Paradise.

Palestine, where many of the original discoveries were made, is very much like the State of California in everything except size. It is practically a California reduced to one-twentieth in size. It is very similar in climate, vegetation and agriculture. Like California it is longest north to south. It has high mountains, reaching an elevation of 10,000 feet. The Dead Sea, 1,200 feet below the sea level, is the greatest depression known, and, like the Death Valley of California, is situated in the extreme south.

Passing from west to east we have the coast zone extending along the Mediterranean similar to the region of the Pacific, then we have the hills and plateaus of the mountains of Judea and Galilee, which practically form the backbone of the country and are similar to the foothill region of California. Farther east is the valley of the Jordan. All of this region from time immemorial has been devoted to pastures and the cultivation of cereals. It is regarded as the granary of the country and has been famed since the Bible times for the abundant herbs of Bashan. All of these places are well known to the average mortal through reference to them in the Scriptures as having been the scene of the labors and the home of Christ.

If we consider the varied natural conditions of Palestine and the peculiar methods of cultivation which have been brought about by political condition—the vicissitudes of war, the continual migration of tribes—we can readily understand why so many varieties of cultivated plants have been developed there and why the country is such an interesting one and so full of promise.

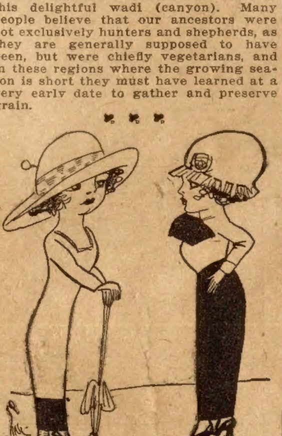
At a little market in Haifa, Palestine, there were seen five or six different kinds of wheat, but for the sake of illustration we will take only three—the "Nursy," the "Zerlin" and the "Dalaika"—named after the villages which produced them. These three villages are hardly ten miles apart, yet each one has its special kind of wheat. The reason for this phenomenon is that the country has for centuries been divided among a number of hostile tribes, each one living in a territory of quite natural boundaries. The hostility of the these neighboring tribes was so great that nearly all commercial relations were destroyed, the only interactions being those of warfare. Access to the markets was thereby cut off and the Arab learned to depend entirely upon the products of his own immediate district. As the same products continued to be cultivated for centuries on the same soils without introduction local kinds of wheat were necessarily developed. These are the conditions which lasted for more than ten centuries in the Orient, but they are now rapidly disappearing.

It is well known that wheat and the other cereals "do not perpetuate themselves in a wild state when they escape from cultivation." The Count de Solms-Laubach, an eminent authority on the subject, ten years ago declared that the genealogical record of wheat had disappeared forever and that its life history could be rewritten only by hypothesis. Although there may be wild species of barely, rye and oats, it is generally admitted that there is none of wheat. It therefore logically follows that wheat must have been cultivated from prehistoric times down to the present day.

Emmer is a kind of wheat which was found in many of the tombs in Egypt of the first dynasty—that is, 4,000 years before the Christian era. It has also been found in the lake dwellings of Wanger and Robenhausen, which date back to the neolithic epoc, a little before the bronze age. This is claimed to be the only species cultivated from the very beginning of cultivation and is the progenitor of our cultivated wheat.

At Wady Waleh in Palestine, where flint instruments were found at the foot of the monolith, the surrounding hills were found to be literally covered with wild barley. This brought up a picture in the mind of the writer of our prehistoric ancestors who lived on the banks of this delightful wadi (canyon). Many people believe that our ancestors were not exclusively hunters and shepherds, as they are generally supposed to have been, but were chiefly vegetarians, and in these regions where the growing season is short they must have learned at a very early date to gather and preserve grain.

* * *



Mrs. Willers—The Binks can't afford to own an auto.

Mrs. Dart—No; but they keep their horse in a garage.

* * *

Bull Run as a Picture.

Kenyon Cox has recently made the assertion that American historical subjects are particularly unfitted for pictorial treatment. But if the time comes when America shall have produced a great painter of military subjects, he will find in the first battle of Bull Run—fought fifty years ago today— a wealth of color and of picturesqueness with which to portray his representation of a nation of peace springing to arms. It was not only that the uniforms were striking, varied and often bizarre, lacking wholly the deadly uniformity of the later days of the Civil War. The ardor was high; the patriotic spirit of self-devotion, even to death, was stamped on thousands of young and resolute faces; precisely as it was on that of Mr. Cox's distinguished father when he took the field with his brigade in the West a week later. The camp followers, from the Congressmen down, who had come from Washington to see the easy Federal victory; the innocent inhabitants of the neighborhood, too surprised by the unwonted spectacle to seek safety in flight, and then the great beauty of much of the battlefield itself, particularly the Henry farm—what better material and setting for the curtain-raiser of a fearful national drama could there be? The painter who cannot turn back in his mind to Manassas, July 21, 1861, and feel thrille and stirred by that spectacle of a citizen soldiery, with the fate of the nation on its shoulders, lacks much, particularly the imagination to visualize an heroic history.

* * *

Wouldn't Mind.

Nurse—You have been badly hurt and I must give you an alcohol rub.

Patient—Are you sure I am not hurt internally?

50,000,000 Corns Ended

A little plaster—our invention—has removed already fifty million corns. It stops the pain instantly. Then a bit of soft B & B wax gently loosens the corn. In two days it comes out.

Please mark that. No pain, no soreness, no inconvenience. In 48 hours no corn. The plaster is applied in a jiffy, and relief is immediate. You forget you have a corn.

Think what folly it is to suffer from corns, to nurse them and pare them. End them to-day

A in the picture is the soft B & B wax. It loosens the corn.
B protects the corn, stopping the pain at once.
C wraps around the toe. It is narrowed to be comfortable.
D is rubber adhesive to fasten the plaster on.

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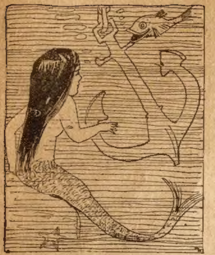


Cora Coral—Why are you so consumed with mirth?

Foxy Fish (looking at an anchor)—Gee, but men are foolish! There isn't a fish in the ocean big enough to swallow that hook.

The Chauffeur's Side.

"O, yes; the public are ready enough to mob the chauffeur," said the young man in the garage, "but you never hear his side of the story. When he takes a lady out for an airing he can't run things to suit himself. He is under orders. He is going along a crowded street when my lady suddenly calls out:

"'Henry, isn't that Mrs. Peters on the sidewalk?'

"I turn my head to look, and bump into a kid crossing the street, and my ladys calls out:

"'Henry, that must be my husband on the steps of the house.'

"I turn round to see, and knock down and old woman. I speed up for three minutes to get away, and am checked down a bit, when my lady exclaims:

"'Henry, that is surely Mrs. Davison.'

"I look for Mrs. Davison and bump a man and a policeman yells at me. I am ordered to get away, and do so, and my heart has just stopped palpitating when my lady calls out:

"'I think that was Mrs. Saunders in that taxi. Hurry up, Henry.'

"I hurry, and take a wheel off of a carriage and graze a stenographer, and before I can get away the police nab me. We are taken to the police station, and when my lady is asked if she wants to give bail for me she replies:

"'No, I think not. Henry is a very careless driver and should be taught a lesson. I think a fine of $5 will be a lesson to him.'"

A Sliding Scale.

A boy entered a butcher-shop and asked the price of sausage. "Fifteen cents a pound," said the man behind the scales. "They only asked me ten cents a pound for it down to the other shop," said the boy. "Why didn't you buy it there?" asked the man. "They didn't have any," said the boy. "Well," said the man, "we wouldn't ask but ten cents a pound for it either if we didn't have any."

Because.

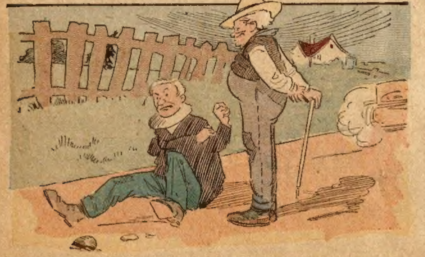
"Why," writes one of these propounders of unanswerable questions, "does a girl always shut her eyes when a man kisses her?"

Send us your photograph and perhaps we can tell you the reason.

A Tip From the Experienced.

"Congratulate me. I am engaged," cried the young bachelor. "I am intoxicated with love."

"Oh, well, you'll sober up on marriage," replied the man who had been all through it.



Lazy Luke—Dat was soitinly an' accommodatin' chauffeur dat jest passed. A while ago his machine struck me an' knocked my arm out er joint an' now he comes back an' knocks it in again.

CHANGE.

Change cars, change your seat,
Change your diet when you eat;
Change your doctor,
Change your vote,
And Fashion says to change your coat;
C'ange, change, change, change,
Change a bill and get some change,
For "change" itself is quite a change;
No matter what you're doing—change,
Then change your habits,
Change your life;
But when you wish to change your wife,
Because you've made a better find,
Just change your mind!

The Loving Cup.

The secretary of a social club was presented with a cut glass loving cup. His servant surveyed the object the next morning.

"Look at them three handles on th' pitcher," said Bridget. "They know if Oi break one of thim handles they'll have two left, and if Oi break two they'll have one left, so they'll always have one. They will, will they? I'm not so sure about that."

Simple Enough.

"I wish I knew how to make a barrel of money."

"It is simple enough."

"How can it be done?"

"Just spend a small keg in advertising and you'll get back a barrel."

Painful Experience.

"Need any more talent for your moving picture dramas?"

"We might use you. Had any experience at acting without audiences?"

"Acting without audiences is what brought me here."

How Poems Are Written.

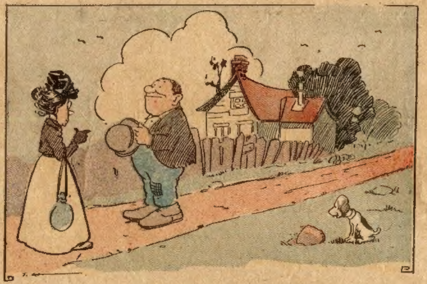
"Your ode to Niagara is the real thing. I felt that way when I first saw the falls."

"I have never seen the falls," explained the poet. "I got the idea from reading a railway booklet."

Popular.

Biggs—Is your daughter popular?

Boggs—Well, I don't like to boast, but fifteen young men are teaching her to swim.



Kind Lady—So you were at one place for three years.
Panhandle Pete—Yes, mum; but I wuz pardoned.

Very Bad.

Jimmie—How's business?
Cracker—Bad, very bad.
Jimmie—What yer been doin' lately?
Cracker—Robbin' safes.

TICKLISH TACKLES

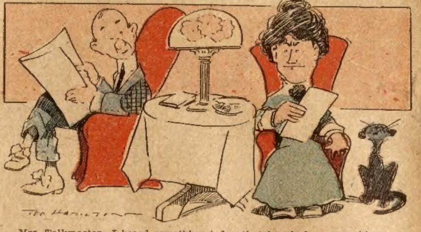
GOOD SENSE.

There's fine sense and coarse sense,
Each good in its way;
But the man who has horse sense
Knows when to say neigh.

Willing.

"How'd you like to sign with me for life's game?" inquired the young man.

"I'm agreeable," replied the girl. "Where's the diamond?"



Mrs. Talkmaster—I heard something today that knocked me speechless.
Mr. Talkmaster—Was it something I could learn to repeat?

George's Wife.

Mr. Jinks—What a trusting little woman George's wife is!

Mrs. Jinks—Yes. She has never been married before.

At the Wedding.

"'Take her right hand.'

"'Take her right hand,' the stupid fellow bellowed, and everybody in the church laughed.

"Afterward he couldn't get the ring on the bride's finger.

"'Wet it,' I whispered.

"And, acting on my advice, he put her little white finger in his mouth, and, after lubricating it thoroughly, succeeded in making the ring slip on."

Biography and Gossip.

Mrs. Gaddy—There are some distinctions in life which are very puzzling to me.

Professor Pundit—Like what, for instance?

Mrs. Gaddy—When you write everything bad and mean in a man's life in a book for everybody to read, it is biography, but when you just tell the same things to a few people on a front porch, it's gossip.

Financial Straits.

"You don't have anything more to do with Bumcke, do you, old man?"

"No; the fellow got me into dreadful financial straits lately."

"How was that?"

"Oh, he kept on loaning me money month after month—and suddenly he demanded it all back!"

Doubtful Compliment.

"He gave you quite a compliment last evening."

"Wasn't that lovely of him! What did he say about me?"

"He said you were not looking like yourself."

A Hearse Race.

Frank Work dearly loved a fast trotter. By the same token he hated to drive at a slow pace.

A friend took him out one day behind a pair of bays. Either the bays were slow or the driver believed in sparing his horseflesh. At any rate, Work returned home in a rather glum humor.

"Did you have a nice drive, father?" one of his daughters asked.

"Nice?" snorted Work. "Why, the very hearses passed us, cheering as they went."

Loyal Hubby.

Wifey—Why didn't you stop in at the drug store yesterday and get the things I asked you to?

Hubby—Well, my dear, I remembered that I promised you never to do anything to bring a blush to your cheek.

A Warning.

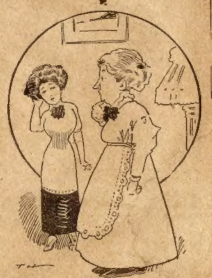
The owner of a large library solemnly warned a friend against practice of lending books. To punctuate his advice he showed his friend the well-stocked shelves. "There!" said he. "Every one of these books was lent me."

Her Favorite Author.

"Do you see that nice looking man over there? That's my favorite author."

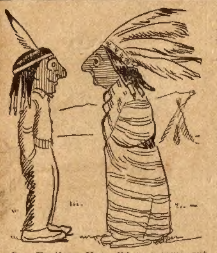
"What have you read of his?"

"Nothing. But I danced twice with him last night."



Her Mother—Why are you still keeping up your quarrel with Heury? He's admitted he was wrong in your dispute.

Mrs. Nubride—I know he has, but he hasn't said that I was right.



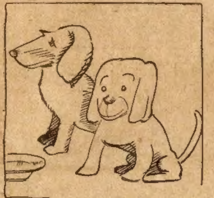
One Feather—How did you come out on that poker game with the cowboy?

War Bonnet—Oh, I had the lead about a mile coming home, but I saved more cartridges than he did. He's a poor shot.

Inexpensive Trips.

"Geewhillikins, Skillington," said Blabsworth, meeting his Chicago friend in the corridor of a New York hotel, "you must be prosperous! I see you and Mrs. Skillington out motoring in the park every blessed morning and afternoon. What does it cost you?"

"Nothing at all, 'Blab,'" said Skillington. "The madam and I are enjoying a few demonstrations, that's all. With sixty first-class cars on the market one can motor around New York twice a day for a whole month at the cost of a blue veil and a pair of goggles."



Victor—About a thousand fleas have managed to get on my visiting list.
Hector—Scratch 'em off!

The Separation.

They were in a magnificently decorated room in the West End of London. They approached each other from opposite directions. One of them was pale as a ghost, the other blushing red as a cherry. Presently they met, and careless of the fact that dozens of eyes were watching them, they kissed each other. The meeting seemed to bring them perfect peace, but alas, alack! They had scarcely been side by side twenty seconds when a man approached with fire of battle in his eye. With cool insolence he raised the stick he carried, and then—oh horror! He struck a sharp, quick blow, and the pale one was sent spinning several feet away. The other neither screamed nor fainted. There was no heart-breaking, no resentment, not even a murmur. Billiard balls are used to that sort of thing.

A Modern Mother.

Nurse Girl—Oh, ma'am, what shall I do? The twins have fallen down the well!

Fond Parent—Dear me! how annoying! Just go into the library—very gently, so as not to disturb Fido—and get the last number of the Modern Mother's Magazine; it contains an article on "How to Bring Up Children."

His Grace.

Usually Oliver Cromwell said the following before meals:

"Some people have food, but no appetite; others have an appetite, but no food. I have both. The Lord be praised!"

Long-Distance Courtship.

A lady was one day approached by her Scotch maid with the information that she was about to leave.

"What is the cause of this sudden decision, Mary?"

"I think I'll be a-marryin'."

"Indeed! And whom, may I ask?"

"The man that sits across in the kirk o' Sundays."

"But what is his name?"

"I dinna ken."

"What! You're surely not engaged to a man whose name you do not know!"

"Not engaged, my lady, but he's been lang lookin' at me an' I think he'll soon be speakin'."

An American Query.

Stories continue to come in of the doings of Americans during the coronation. Every American goes sightseeing, and as one of the conducted trips drove past Grosvenor House the guide, pointing it out, said:

"That is the town house of the Duke of Westminster, one of our largest landed proprietors."

A pretty girl on the second seat looked up in a sudden enthusiasm:

"Oh!" she cried. "Who landed him!"

Tale of Two Cities.

Mr. Gotham—Ha, ha, ha! That's good. The paper says a man in Philadelphia was run over by a funeral procession. Ho, ho, ho! Such a thing couldn't happen outside of slow old Philadelphia.

Mr. Broadbrim—A similar accident happened in New York only recently.

Mr. Gotham—Impossible.

Mr. Broadbrim—It was a rich man's funeral, and the relatives were going back to the house to hear the will read.

Arithmetic.

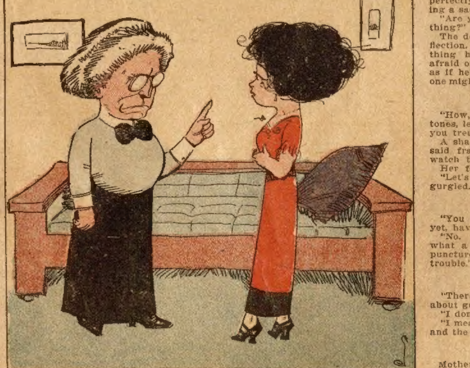
When Guy was a small boy, his father brought him a pair of rabbits; he soon had a litter of rabbits and they in turn increased until the place was full of rabbits. To a visitor one day Guy's mother said: "Have you seen Guy's rabbits? He has thirty-five now."

"Oh, mother," said Guy, "you multiply much faster than the rabbits. I have only twenty-five."

Aggravating.

Mother (to child who has left playmates in park)—Why have you left the others? What do you want, dear?

Little Girl—I've come here because Ella's so aggravatin' (a pause). At least, she will be when she finds I've broken the leg off her new doll.

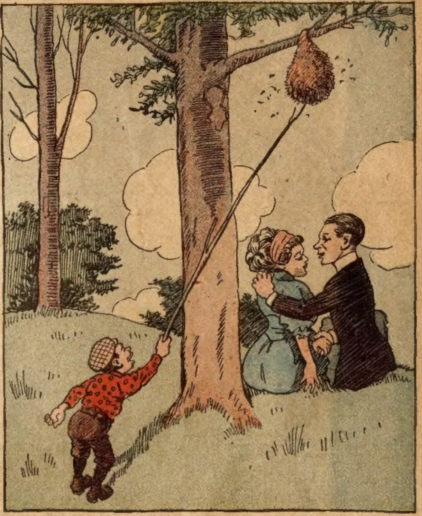


Mamma—Didn't I see Edwin throwing kisses up at you on the balcony?
Hazel—Those weren't kisses, mamma; he was just practicing a new curve throw.

When a Soft Drink is Hard.

"You are arrested on a very serious charge, my young man," began the court, looking at the man severely. "You are accused of getting into a fight and hitting the complainant over t'e head with a bottle. What have you to say for yourself?"

"Your honor, I didn't mean to hurt him. I never thought that it would hurt him very much, 'cause the bottle contained nothing but a soft drink," returned the prisoner.



The Sword of Damocles.

Unpopular Pastors.

Bilkins—I don't like our preacher. He mixes religion and politics.

Jimkins—I don't like our preacher. He mixes business and religion. Last Sunday he preached against cheating.

Poor John!

She—I consider, John, that sheep are the stupidest creatures living.

He (absent-mindedly)—Yes, my lamb!

A Medical Mind Reader.

An Irishman had been injured while working. The wound was but a trifling one, but his employer, having in view the demands that might be made upon him, sent the sufferer at once to the hospital. After the house surgeon had examined him carefully, he said to the nurse:

"As subcutaneous abrasion is not observable, I do not think there is any reason to apprehend tegumental cicatrixation of the wound." Then, turning to the patient, he asked quizzically:

"What do you think, Pat?"

"Sure," said Pat, "ye're a wonderful thought reader, sir, ye took the very words out of me mouth. That's jist what I was goin' to say!"

A Scary Horse.

A man in upper New York City, who was desirous of purchasing a horse for the use of his wife, recently entered into negotiations with a veteran horse dealer.

"Now, I'm not so particular about speed," said the prospective purchaser, "but I must have a gentle horse."

"Here is one that I'll warrant to be perfectly safe," said the dealer, indicating a sad-looking steed nearby.

"Are you sure he is not afraid of anything?" insisted the man.

The dealer assumed an air of deep reflection. "Well," he said, "there's one thing he has always appeared to be afraid of ever since I got him. It seems as if he's scared to death for fear some one might say 'whoa!' and he not hear it."

How He Could.

"How," she murmured in passionate tones, leaning across the table, "how can you treat me so?"

A shadow crossed his brow. Then he said frankly: "Well, I got $25 on my watch today."

Her face was wreathed in dimples.

"Let's have some more lobster," she gurgled.

A Risk.

"You have never run over any one yet, have you?"

"No. You see, you can never tell what a man has in his pockets and a punctured tire is a deuce of a lot of trouble."

Marine Courtesies.

"There is a great deal of politeness about going to sea, isn't there?"

"I don't know how you mean."

"I mean in the way of the ocean's wave and the ship's bow."

Enough for Two.

Mother—Didn't you shrink when you got in the water and met the gaze of all those men?

Daughter—Well—er—my bathing suit did.

ON HIS METTLE;

Or, The Adventures of Ralph Overton

By J. M. MERRILL

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CHAPTER XVIII.

A LOSING CARD.

IT WAS two days after the disappearance and supposed drowning of Ralph Overton that Fatty Tugwell, who sat blinking in the sun before his comfortable cottage, started up with hand lifted to shade his big round eyes. A man was approaching on horseback, which was not an unusual sight in that part of the country. The man proved to be Richard Villaindon. He drew rein a few yards distant and bade the fat boy a respectful good morning.

"I suppose you have heard the news, Peg?" said the big man with a serious face.

"I am not sure of that," answered Peg.

"I speak of the untimely taking off of that rash boy, Ralph Overton."

"Taking off?" in a puzzled tone. "What's the rip now? Has Ralph run away or murdered somebody?"

"The last he did as you know; the first, yes, he ran away, started to sail out of Bay Haven and accidentally fell overboard and was drowned."

"I don't believe the yarn."

Fatty's face reddened, his stout frame trembling with rising passion.

"There is no cause for anger on your part, Mr. Tugwell," vouchsafed the rich man with great dignity. "I felt very sorry for the poor waif, and took him directly home with me as you know. He proved anything but docile. It was in the blood, I suppose, to be ungovernable and wicked. However, I am not here to disparage the memory of the boy, now that he is dead. I came on another errand."

"What is your errand?"

"This will explain."

The man handed down a bit of folded paper which the fat boy accepted, opened and proceeded to read.

"Peleg: Let Mr. Villaindon have anything belonging to me now at your house. He has been good to me and I want him to have it—the little cross, you know, that I left there. Be good to yourself. RALPH."

Villaindon had dismounted by the time Peg had read the note which was written in a scrawly, boyish hand.

"You see how it is, Mr. Tugwell——"

"Did Ralph write this?" demanded Fatty with sharp suddenness.

"Isn't his name signed to it?"

"Of course, but it may be a forgery you know."

Unblinkingly the big gray eyes of the fat boy read the face of his visitor.

"Do you think me capable of that?"

The rich man drew himself up haughtily as he spoke.

"You might be for aught I know. What about this cross?"

"What about it?"

"Yes. Whose is it; what does it amount to; is it of any great value? I reckon it must be, so many folks want to get their hands on it."

"I wasn't aware of that. Who has asked for it aside from myself?"

"That foreman of yours wanted it; besides, a queer duffer came along one day and asked me about a cross—the Cross of St. Glebe he called it."

"Exactly," showing interest. "That is the one. I trust you were keen enough not to give the cross to a stranger, Peg."

"Quite too keen for that, Mr. Villaindon."

"Good. You are a smart boy and I like you——"

"Thanks awfully, old man," grinned Peg.

"I think I shall be able to place you in a good paying position before long."

"Never you mind," said the boy, "I couldn't leave Jill, you know."

"No? Of course, that is natural. My sister needs a maid; Jill shall fill the place while you come into my office. Now, then, let us go in and get the things poor Ralph left here."

Villaindon dropped his rein over a bush and turned toward the house. Peg followed, the two entering the living-room, where the boy offered his caller a chair.

"I see that Jill is out just at this minute," said Peg. "You'll have to talk to her about the maid business. Chances are she'll turn you down. Jill has a way of her own, sir."

"I don't think she will refuse a good place with a good pay attached," and the rich man shrugged his shoulders and laughed.

"Now," said Villaindon after a brief rest, "we will look at the things."

"The things?"

"The articles that my chore-boy left here for me."

"He left none, sir."

Peg stood with one foot upon a chair, leaning elbow upon knee, his chin in hand, his face turned toward Villaindon, his saucy gray eyes dancing a merry jig. The visitor grew impatient.

"I haven't time to waste," he declared, smiting his hands together dramatically. "You will hardly refuse to heed the request of the boy himself. You have his note telling you how to dispose of this cross and such other articles he may have left in your keeping."

"He left no articles, no clothing, no cross, nothing at all, sir."

"How can that be?" demanded Villaindon, half rising. "This note of his calls for something—for the Cross of St. Glebe."

Peg read the note again.

"It does call for the cross of which I know nothing."

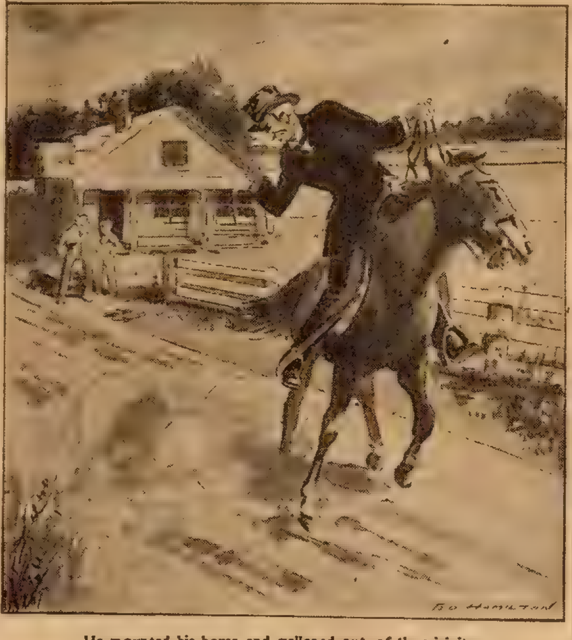
"But if it is not here, why did Ralph think it was?" persisted the timberman.

"He did not think so."

There was a bellicose attitude with the fat boy at last.

"This note——"

"Is a bold forgery!" charged Peg with considerable feeling. "Ralph Overton lost the cross; I never saw it, since he did not have it when he came to my house. Because this is the fact, I brand your note a forgery, Mr. Villaindon."



He mounted his horse and galloped out of the vicinity.

"You insulting young vagabond!"

White with rage the rich man sprang to his feet and faced the fat boy with blazing eyes and upraised hand.

Peg did not quail. He never quite liked the big mogul of the timber camps and now he recognized in him a villainous schemer.

"Stand back, old man," warned the boy.

"You accused me of forging——"

"I did and do; you have played a villain's part," retorted the fat boy. "I could have you arrested for this last trick if I chose, and I've a good mind to do it."

"Give me that note."

Villaindon advanced with outstretched hand. Peg stood back, thrusting the note deep into his trousers pocket.

"I guess nit," the boy chuckled. "I have you on the hip there, old man."

"You fat rascal! I'll wring your neck unless you give me that paper!"

Discovering his mistake in attempting to fool the young resident of Grass Flats, the big man of the timber camps was anxious to get back the note which its recipient had rightly adjudged a forgery. Villaindon had too many irons in the fire to care to leave this suspicious youngster in possession of a compromising paper. He resolved to regain the note by force if necessary. Peg suddenly retreated as his visitor advanced.

"I don't wonder you are afraid," sneered the great man.

"Not of you am I afraid," quickly retorted Peg. "I don't want to do you an injury, Mr. Villaindon, but of one thing be sure, I shan't give up this paper you just handed me, purporting to come from my friend, Ralph Overton."

"Why won't you give it up?"

The timberman seemed suddenly disposed to conciliation.

"Because you have no right to it, sir."

"No right when I—er—wrote—er—got it from Ralph." The man stumbled wretchedly in his language. He grew confused and red in the face.

Peg was delighted at the trepidation of the other. He grinned as he said: "That's correct; you wrote it yourself; of course you did; I suspected it all the time. It's one-half in owning up, old man. You forged the note after sending Ralph Overton to his death—if he is dead as you no doubt wish him to be—thinking you would get your hands on the Cross of St. Glebe. You didn't get it did you, old geezer? Fact is, you wouldn't have got it, anyhow, even if the request actually came from Ralph."

"You are an impudent young scoundrel!"

"You're another."

Peg dodged around the table as Villaindon came at him with angry menace. A pretty little race followed, the fat boy eluding his pursuer and gliding into the next room, closing the door in the face of his tormentor. The timberman pushed and thumped on the door. Peg laughed behind it.

For several minutes Villaindon stood with twisting, angry mouth, pommeling the door. He ceased at length and turned away. His horse pawed restlessly outside. There was no likelihood of a compromise with the fat boy and the man of millions decided to return empty-handed as he had come.

"Hold on! Don't go off mad," called the tantalizing voice of Peg, who, the moment his visitor gave over the battle, opened the door and advanced from the next room. Villaindon faced about suddenly.

"We have both been fools," he said, forcing a hearty laugh. "Forget all about this visit, Peg. It was all a joke, anyhow."

"A joke, you tell me. Then Ralph ain't dead after all?"

"Oh, yes, he is, that part was true. He hired out to sail on the schooner Rainbow and sometime during the night fell overboard and was drowned. The papers give a complete account of it. Haven't you seen them?"

"No I haven't. When did it happen?"

"Night before last."

"This may be like the paper—the pretended note from Ralph," hesitated Peg.

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"No, no, it is heaven's truth," avowed the timberman.

He drew a paper from his pocket to show the boy, when a girl burst from the bushes near and came running, crying in a loud voice: "Ralph ain't drowned! He's alive, alive I tell you, for I just now saw him coming up the bank of the river!"

CHAPTER XIX.

A BATTLE TO THE FINISH.

Ralph was astonished at the act of his strange friend setting the prisoner free. The man sprang up, shook himself and glared at the boy.

"You see, I am unafraid of you, Job Hutter," said Godfrey, standing back and eyeing his late prisoner with keen scrutiny.

The fellow stood uneasily eyeing Ralph.

"You must go with me, boy," he said.

"I am not so minded," returned our hero, taking a step toward safety. "You have no warrant, I'll never go without one."

"Pshaw!" impatiently. "What's the difference? You'll have to face the court, anyhow; you may as well go along with me. I'll divide the reward with you, providing you go peaceably."

"No," put in Godfrey, "my boy friend will not go along with you. If he decides to go to court he will do so of his own free will; you'll get no reward—it's not on the books. My advice to you is to follow your partner, who was wise enough to get off as fast as he could go."

"Consarn him for playing the deserter. If Kale'd stood by as he ought we could easily have got the boy. I don't see why you defend him, man, guilty as he certainly is of murder."

"That's my business. Go now, Job Hutter, and tell no one you saw either Ralph Overton or me."

"I shall have to make the best of it, I suppose."

With that the man walked sullenly away. Boy and man kept tab on his movements until well assured that he meditated no treachery, then came back to the shanty and faced the new situation so unexpectedly thrust upon them.

"I may as well skip out," decided Ralph.

"Or do the other thing."

"That is to——"

"Give yourself up to the law."

"You are older than I, Mr. Godfrey. What would you advise?"

"I dislike to give advice after what has happened. It was unfortunate that you disclosed yourself to these men. It is too late, however, to cry over spilled milk. We must devise something for the future. If we could only find the Cross of St. Glebe now, all would be well."

"Do you think that, sir?" asked the boy in astonishment. "That cross was a simple toy, pinned to my neck by a pious mother. What could that do to help me in a case of this sort. Law folks ain't superstitious, Mr. Godfrey."

"They don't have to be," commented the other. "I am acting on the supposition that you are wholly innocent of the murder of Gragdon—you assured me of this yourself, my boy."

"Maybe I did, but I did not mean to deceive."

"What now? Did you really kill the man?" half angrily demanded Godfrey.

"As I told you, he went over the bluff into Roaring Run because of my push. He might have cracked his skull against a rock as he went down. Would that be murder, sir?"

"I should not call it so; simply a case of self-defense. Depend upon it old Villaindon has made this complaint; he hopes, now that you did not drown, to get you out of his way in some other manner; this is the safest for him I suspect."

"But what have I done——"

"Nothing of yourself. You are simply in his way."

"I don't see how that can be. I without a cent, he a millionaire many times over. Why, what you say is preposterous!"

"The Cross of St. Glebe would explain all that."

"In what way, sir?"

"I can't exactly tell; it holds a secret that old Villaindon would give his eyeteeth to get hold on and destroy."

"Too bad I lost the cross."

Ralph sighed and seemed very much depressed. His companion noticed this and plucked at his sleeve, saying: "Never you fear, my boy. Keep up your grit. You are on your mettle now; you'll win out in the long run. Can't you contrive to think about where you lost that precious cross?"

"It must have been at the house on Grass Flats," quickly decided Ralph, memories of his brief sojourn at the home of the Tugwells coming to him. "I'll tell you what I'll do, Mr. Godfrey."

"Good, boy! Tell away."

"I'll go back to that house and make a close search; who knows but I may be able to find that precious cross yet? If I fail, then I am ready to give up."

"Never say die, my boy," cheered the queer Mr. Godfrey.

Now that the hiding-place of our fugitive boy had been discovered it would not be safe for the lad to remain here. Man and boy consulted for some time. Ralph decided at length that he would make one more effort to find the lost cross, after which, found or not, he would give himself up to the authorities.

"This suspense is the worst thing of all," declared the boy. "I feel like a criminal all the time, hiding away from the people—that's the way it seems to me. I'll not disgrace the memory of my mother by doing this another day."

"Well, how about your father, boy?"

"I never knew him. He must have died or deserted mother when I was an infant."

"And so you do not care to see him?" The eyes of the speaker were filled with moist light.

Ralph regarded the man keenly, wondering at the interest he had taken in his welfare. Of a sudden he put this question: "Did you know the Overtons, Mr. Godfrey—my father in particular?"

"Yes, I knew them both," assented the strange man, suppressing a sigh.

"Then you will tell me all about them," cried our hero, with eager interest. "I have often wondered how I came to be cast adrift to wind up in the poorhouse. The moment I felt able I got out of there; but I did not better myself very much. It is something to be one's own boss, though."

"That it is," agreed the other.

"Tell me about my folks, sir."

"I can tell you something about your father. He was a passably good man, never quite good enough for your mother—no man could be that. He was a boatbuilder on a small scale. Later he sailed for the Far East, hoping to better his fortunes. He made a sad failure of it, was wrecked and came near being eaten by cannibals. When he got away and once more among white folks he learned that his wife was dead, his boy gone no one knew where."

The speaker brushed his hand across his eyes and dropped into silence.

"But he tried to find the boy?"

"Sure he did, but his brain was muddled from a long fever he contracted in the tropics. He became a wanderer, looking for his boy, seeking for a stolen fortune."

"Why, then he had a fortune, after all?"

"Not he, but his boy had."

"I do not understand."

"The lad had a maternal grandfather who was good to him."

"And left him lots of money. That is like a story book."

"I'm not sure about that. You father has been investigating; he believes his son ought to be rich, because of what he learned in the East. Bothered with this brain trouble he has been unable to get at the facts—I can tell you no more now, Ralph."

The elderly man turned and walked away by himself. Ralph did not follow. He was too sensitive and thoughtful of others to think of forcing his presence upon any one not desiring it. He, too, walked away by himself so that when the queer Mr. Godfrey again sought his boy friend he could not locate him.

"Hello, Ralph!" shouted the man.

But Ralph did not "hello" in return. Godfrey searched the vicinity in vain.

"Goodness me! I hope the little chap hasn't gone off mad," muttered he. "Like as not it would have been much better if I'd told him everything. I'll hunt him up before he falls into the hands of old Villaindon."

Our boy hero was not unmindful of the great service this strange man had rendered him, and he was very grateful for it, yet he could no longer tarry in hiding. He was sorely anxious about the lost Cross of St. Glebe and meant to turn all his future efforts toward finding it. There were some papers as well, yet for the loss of these he did not particularly care; it was the cross that was of the greatest importance—his mother's precious gift to her baby boy!

Ralph set his face inland once more, his objective point being the house on Grass Flats. He believed the cross had slipped from his pocket while there, and it was barely possible that Peg had before now found it.

The boy stoppped for the night at a farmhouse, pursuing his journey the following day. Nobody seemed to suspect him of being the much-sought-for criminal. The papers had given an account of his drowning and most people were content to let it rest at that.

"Hello, you scrub!"

Ralph started at a sharp, angry cry from the roadside.

A boy burst from the bushes and confronted him, a boy and a dog, the latter a big-eyed shepherd, who showed his teeth in a growl.

"I've got you now!"

The speaker was Ralph's quondam friend of Highland Hall, Enoch Barnaby of the red head and prominent teeth.

"I knew that yarn about your drowning wasn't true," went on the heir to a million, screwing his mouth into a smirk. "You're as full of deceit as an egg is of meat. Sic 'em, Bose!"

The dog began to bark and circle about our hero. Glancing aside Ralph saw a considerable club by the path; this he quickly snatched and dealth a blow that laid the snarling cur bleeding and senseless on the sward.

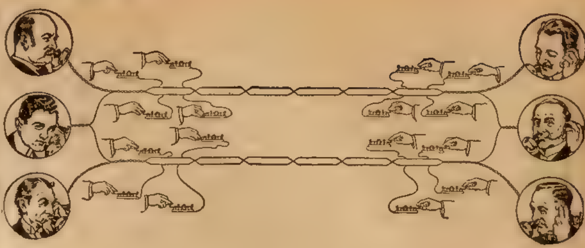
"Hey, you! you've killed my dog!" yelled the angry Enoch.

"Stand aside or I'll fix you the same way."

"Coward!" jeered the red-headed boy. "You daren't face me without a club. That's the difference between us, anyhow. You'll pay for my dog——"

"Come on."

Ralph tossed aside his club, doubled



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his fists and boldly faced the angry heir.

Enoch produced a knife, opened it and made a lunge. Our hero was justly incensed at this. He dodged the knife and hit his enemy across the face with the flat of his hand. A roar went up. Enoch danced and lunged with his knife, twice coming very close to cutting his opponent.

"I'll git ye now, I'll git ye now!" yelled the heir, brandishing and lunging with his knife.

Ralph danced about with the agility of a cat. He saw his chance when the other went past him in one of his wild rushes and sent in a blow that downed the enemy. Enoch's knife flew out of his hand as he fell. Ralph picked it up and turned upon his assailant.

"Mercy! Mercy!" gasped the frightened heir. "Don't murder me, Ralph!"

"Murder you!" sneered the ex-chore-boy. "All I want is to teach you something." With that he flung the knife far into the bushes, after which he turned upon Enoch and gave him a sound beating with his naked fists.

This done our hero turned to look at the dog. To his surprise he found that his blow had crushed the animal's skull. And so he had another killing to answer for. Surely his cup of bitterness was nearing its full —

"Good-by, Enoch," said Ralph soberly. "When next we meet I hope you will be decent enough to let me alone." With that our hero walked on.

"Come back!" yelled the beaten boy, holding his bleeding nose. "You'll pay for my dog; my uncle will see about that."

"Oh, is that so?"

Ralph pursued his way, however, and arrived in the neighborhood of the Tugwell cottage as has been narrated in a preceding chapter.

CHAPTER XX.

CAPTURED.

The proclamation made by pretty Jill Tugwell took both boy and man by surprise. Mr. Villaindon stood in the open door as the girl ran forward.

"What do you mean, Miss Jill, by this nonsense?" he asked.

Fact was the rich man had heard nothing about the escape of the late chore-boy from the fate supposed to have been meted out to him by the skipper of the schooner Rainbow. The outcry of Jill quite startled him

"I mean what I say," retorted the brisk little maid. "I was out near the run picking berries when I saw a boy walking along the bank, coming directly toward our house. I heard a man tell another that Ralph Overton was drowned, so it kind of frightened me when I saw that the boy coming was Ralph."

"Or his ghost," chuckled the brother.

Before anything more could be said, from beyond the bushes through which Jill had made her way came the sound of a high pitched whistle, the well-known alarm of Ralph, the chore-boy.

The face of the millionaire was a study. A sudden pallor crossed from mouth to ear, his eyes glittered with queer light, his hands falling with nervous twitches to his side. Peg noted all this with satisfaction.

"The old skeezix fears Ralph Overton," was the fat boy's decision.

Villaindon stepped into the open air as Ralph came swinging through the bushes and faced the trio at the cottage door.

"Good day, Mr. Villaindon. Howdy, Peg? Howdy, Jill?"

Such was the greeting given the trio by our returning hero. Peg and his sister were cordially glad to meet Ralph once more. Villaindon assumed cordiality as he shook hands with the returned lad whom he had hoped and believed was at this time at the bottom of the bay.

"So the newspaper report was untrue," said the rich man at length.

"It looks like it," and Ralph laughed lightly

Villaindon frowned, saying: "I am glad for you, of course, but——"

"But I am up against another proposition, you think," echoed our hero. "I have thought of that, sir, and am ready to face the music. Can I see you alone, Peg?"

"Bet you can, old chap," responded the fat boy.

The two entered the house, leaving Jill to entertain the august millionaire. The latter, however, was not in a mood for conversation. He mounted his horse and galloped from the vicinity.

"No use, Ralph," declared Peg, when made acquainted with the errand of his friend. "I've looked the house over, from cellar to garret. The cross ain't here."

"Then I don't know what I can do. Villaindon is my enemy; he wishes me dead He hired Captain Briggs to drop me into the bay, where I should be now but for Ethan Godfrey, who took me into his skiff and brought me to shore."

Thereupon our hero told Peg the whole of his adventures and about the queer Ethan Godfrey.

"He is my friend, Peg," concluded the chore-boy. "He knew my parents, and all about this cross, which it seems has much to do with my life history. If I never find it I shall not be able to get ahead of old Villaindon who, so Ethan says, has wronged me, robbed me of my rights, and has tried to get me out of his way forever. It's all a puzzle to me of course. Godfrey did not tell me all, but he told me enough so that I am sure the millionaire is my deadily enemy."

"He has certainly acted like it," agreed the fat boy. "We'll circumvent the old sinner yet, be sure of that. His errand here today was to get a clew onto that cross; he wants it awful bad I tell you. He pretended to think you had left it in my keeping."

Then Peg told his friend of the forged note. The two at once decided that Richard Villaindon was a first-class villain, and that it was their duty to act accordingly.

"We may never be able to find the cross," said Fatty, "but that won't prevent our doing what we can to beat old Villaindon at his own game. You seem to be a thorn in his side that scratches pretty deep. Keep it scratching, Ralph. It'll bring blood after a while."

The two boys consulted for some time, after which Jill got a steaming dinner on the table to which they did ample justice. Ralph found himself alone with the girl when her brother went out to harness the pony preparatory to taking Ralph back to town.

"I guess you think I'm a queer sort," began our hero.

"I think you are a very smart chap," she said quickly. "You have had a lot of trouble, but you are sure to come out on top at the end. Your grit is what I like to see in a boy. Now, Peg——"

"Has a lot more grit than I have," ventured Ralph, laughing.

"He calls his impudence sand," put in the girl. "Peg has enough of that. We are your friends, Ralph, and mean to see you through—that is Peg does——"

"And you, too, I know."

The lonely lad put out his hand and took Jill's in his own. "I never had a sister," he went on. "If I'd had one I should have wanted her to be like you, Jill."

"You may call me your sister, Ralph," artlessly returned Jill, without a blush, since she was wholly unconscious of anything save friendship for the adventurous chore-boy.

Peg came then and bore his friend away, leaving Jill to manage the place during his absence. The two boys discussed the situation in all its bearings. Peg was for making a stiff fight against the enemy, while Ralph had a half a notion to surrender and make the best of it.

"I ought to see Mr. Godfrey," finally decided the fugitive boy. "He will know what is best for me to do. He is very smart."

"Where will you find him?"

"Perhaps at the fishing shanty"

"That shack will be watched; you wouldn't dare go there."

"If that plaguey cross would only come to light," groaned Ralph.

"I think it will some day."

"I don't, then."

"Why won't it?"

"Because I have an idea that Gragdon robbed me of it while I was at the timber shanty."

"When did you first miss it?"

"At your house, Peg, as you must remember.

"Then 'tain't likely the ugly foreman stole it. If he had he and his master wouldn't have been so anxious after it as you remember. No, Ralph, depend upon it that cross is bound to turn up some day, and when it does the secrets it contains will knock old Villaindon off his perch and land you where you belong."

Thus the boys chatted as they rode along toward the city, little recking the fact that they were being pursued. From the direction in which they had come there galloped a single horseman, a man with fierce eyes and wing-like black mustache—the newly elected sheriff of the county.

Report of the escape of Ralph Overton from drowning had got upon the streets; Mr. Villaindon, the millionaire timber dealer, had called on the new sheriff; the two were friends, and he put the official wise regarding the fugitive chore-boy.

Immediately on his return to town Villaindon had notified Gilhake, the sheriff, of Ralph's whereabouts, and that official was soon on the road with a warrant for the boy's arrest.

Before reaching the Tugwell cottage the sheriff made a detour, coming upon the house from the rear. This was done to avoid alarming his quarry, who was, as he knew, famous for his escapes from the officers and others.

Jill did not happen to be in at the time A passing pedestrian informed Gilhake that he had met two boys in a buckboard a short distance down the road. The sheriff knew then that he had missed his mark by making that detour. Chagrined, yet full of hope for immediate results, he spurred his horse down the main road in hot pursuit.

"Who's that coming?"

It was Ralph who spoke. He heard the clatter of hoofs and turned his head.

"Great guns! it's the new sheriff!" exclaimed Peg as he looked about, then plied the whip to his pony.

Then began a very pretty race down that country road, a race that could of necessity have but one ending.

"No use!" cried Ralph. "Don't kill your horse. I will surrender."

"No, you won't!"

Peg turned his horse down a by-road and plunged into a thick growth of cedars. Off to the left was a thick swamp. Peg halted long enough to give his companion a lift and a push, sending him headlong from the seat into the bushes.

"Hold on there or I'll shoot!" yelled Gilhake, riding up.

"Shoot and be blamed!" hurled the fat boy in return.

Peg had completely halted now, barring the progress of the sheriff. The officer whirled from his saddle and plunged into the thicket in pursuit of the fleeing boy. Fatty raised his whip as the man passed and cut him smartly across the cheek. Gilhake yelled, but did not break his dash for his quarry.

Ralph hustled into the thick cedars, but not fast enough to escape his pursuer, who was close upon the boy as he plunged headlong over a fallen tree.

"I've got you know!"

Ralph saw a great hulk leap to crush him into the soft earth, saw and turned completely over, hiding himself under the log.

The sheriff came down with a mighty crash. A groan announced that he had injured himself. The fellow did not rise. Ralph actually felt sorry for him. He crawled from under the log to a spot a few paces away and regarded the fierce-faced new sheriff. The man was white from the pain he suffered.

"Hurt you much?" queried the boy, scrambling to his feet.

"My soul! I've broken my leg!" groaned the man.

Ralph approached with words of sympathy. Officials who chased him were wont to meet with accidents, the boy thought. He approached and stood close to the fallen man

"I am sorry," he said. "Can I do anything for you, sir?"

The only reply came from the arms of the fallen man which suddenly clasped the boy's legs and hurled him prostrate.

"I've got you now!" cried the sheriff, in a husky, triumphant voice.

The conclusion of this interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

* * *

Wicks—What's young Pettipate fussing about?

Hicks—He lost some important papers.

Wicks—Some important documents?

Hicks—Nope. He wants to smoke and those were his last cigarette papers.

* * *

An Invitation.

Him—You are the breath of my life!

Her—Did you ever try holding your breath?

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The purpose of Beauty is to refine the native uncouthness of human nature. We all bow to its power. It is the only autocracy that has no nihilist shadow. Alas! this means the fat woman must serve instead of rule, for beauty in woman is a composite of both line and feature.

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Climbing the Barrier

(Continued from page six.)

that he wanted her to smile and be cheerful. So he talked as favorably as he could about the other members of the party, and said that he expected they would put in an appearance sooner or later. The day passed without any signs of the others, and it was at supper that Genie made the first remark that was not an answer to something Worth had said.

"I wish I had my violin," she said. "Somehow, I feel like playing, and it would give me something to do to pass away the time."

"Yes, so it would," was the reply. "But we supposed that we would find colder and still colder weather, the farther south we came, and that it would be too cold to play the violin."

"That is what we thought, but now I wish I had brought it. Surely we will not have to stay here long, however."

"I don't think so, but it may be some time before the others get back."

The cabin was divided into two rooms: one, the larger, about eight by twelve feet, the other being only about four feet wide by twelve in width, this being intended for a sleeping room for Genie.

The larger room was the livingroom, and Worth had a bunk built in the farther corner, and in one end of the room was a fireplace, in which the cooking was to be done. Worth, who had had lots of experience, having at one time been a prospector in the Rocky Mountains, and who was handy at cooking, attended to that part of it, though Genie had expressed a wish that she might be permitted to do that work, after she learned, and would be glad to have Worth teach her.

"It will be of more value to me to know how to cook, here in this island," she said, "than to be able to play the violin or understand navigation."

"There is no need of it," was the reply. "It is, where we have only a few rude utensils to cook with, more the work of a man than a woman. So I will continue to do the cooking. That is, unless you would prefer to do your own cooking."

"Oh, no," laughed Genie; "I am glad to eat your cooking. You seem to be a first-rate chef."

Worth laughed, though without much show of mirth. "I'm glad you like my cooking," he said.

The days rolled away, and there came no signs of the other members of the party. Genie, after several days of eager watching, began gradually to lose the look of listless expectancy, and to take on a look of listless sadness. She was quiet, without much to say, and Worth was also quiet, though his quietness was engendered more by her actions than by anything else. He would not bother her by trying to get her to talk, when he could see by her appearance that she did not care to do so.

Finally, one evening as they were sitting talking, Genie said: "I begin to fear, Mr. Worth, that my father and the other members of the party have been lost. Surely we would have heard from them by this time."

Worth nodded a slow assent. "Your view would seem to be the correct one, Miss Holman. Though I would not feel certain that they will not appear. Be as cheerful as you can, and keep up a strong heart."

"I shall try and do so," was the reply. "But, what if we were to have to stay here always?"

"We won't," was the reply. "At least, I don't think so. I believe that we can get away from here, though as yet I haven't been able to figure out how we are to do it. The only way, so far as I can see is to build a raft, but if we try to go away on a raft, and should get smashed between the icebergs, or drift out to sea, if we got through the lot of icebergs made by the volcanic action when the island appeared, we would perish. So, I hardly know what we had best do. Our provisions will last only a few months, and then we would probably starve, for there are probably no food supplies on this island."

"There doesn't seem to be anything in the vegetable line, or the fruit or nut line, such as cocoanuts, which might be expected in a place of such tropical warmth."

"We will talk the matter over, and decide what to do later on," said Worth. "For my part, I would rather wait awhile, in the hope that the icebergs may get packed together again, and freeze there, and then we could make our way across the plateau again, most likely."

"So we could. Well, we will do as you say, wait awhile."

Genie was silent after that, and in a little while said she was sleepy, and would go to bed. With a goodnight, she did so, and Worth was left alone.

He sat there for perhaps half an hour, looking into the fireplace, and then with a sober, thoughtful look, went to his bunk and lay down. He did not get to sleep very soon, however, but lay there for two or three hours, thinking.

He did not know it, but Genie was not asleep either. She was doing some thinking, and only she could have told what her thoughts were.

This strange story leads to very extraordinary situations and dramatic episodes. The reader will find it eminently worth reading to the end. Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of it. The surest way to get the Ledger is to subscribe for it and have it come to your home regularly. Today is a good time to attend to this.

❧ ❧ ❧

A Quoit Player.

"Judson Harmon, Governor of Ohio, is one of the most democratic men in the United States."

This was the statement of a member of the House who participated in a talkfest in the Democratic cloakroom regarding the possible candidates for the Democratic nomination for the Presidency in 1912.

"Go out to Ohio," said this member, "and you will find that Harmon is as common as an old shoe. I was out there during the campaign, and I discovered that he has more red blood in his veins and likes to enjoy himself about as well as any man I have ever met.

"During my visit to Columbus I was invited to an outing of the Wyandotte Club, an exclusive organization, the membership of which is limited to about ten. Once a year these ten men invite about a hundred friends to eat with them, and at their last outing Governor Harmon was a guest.

"Shortly after he arrived on the club grounds the Governor became intensely interested in a game of quoits. When the game was most interesting a committee of the club walked up to the Governor and announced that the guests were assembling in the clubhouse and were ready to pay their respects to the chief executive of the State.

"'I can't go over there now,' declared the Governor.

"'Why?' demanded one of the committeemen.

"'Because,' replied the Governor, 'this is a championship game, and I don't propose to miss the finish just to shake hands with a lot of fellows who have known me all their lives.'

"'Will you come over after the game is decided?' the committee asked.

"'Not by a jugful,' declared the Governor. 'This is a championship match, and when the champion is declared I am going to challenge him, and incidentally, give him a few pointers about playing quoits.'

"And he did," said the member in conclusion. "He took off his coat and vest, and when the game was over the guests congratulated him on his ability as a quoit player."

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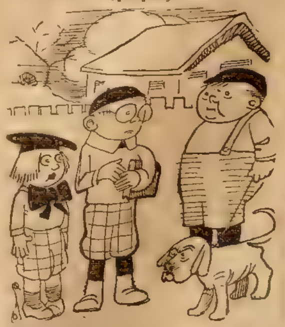

Kid Rollypoly—What're you afraid of? Dis dog only chases de dudes what puts on style.

William—Well, if he's growling at my little brother's necktie it isn't his. It's my sister's and she made him wear it. We ain't to blame, kid.

❧ ❧ ❧

Olfactory Evidence.

A typical old-time "circuit-rider" died recently in Alabama—a man whose godly, unselfish life will long be remembered. Many were the eccentricities of this rugged old man, and many anecdotes are current among the Methodist ministers of the State concerning him. He was noted for two things—his denunciation of sin in no uncertain tones, and the familiarity with which he addressed the Lord in prayer.

On one occasion he had been preaching in a log meeting house in the piny woods of north Alabama. There were several young fellows on hand who had been celebrating by patronizing a still hard by. After a long, fiery sermon the preacher made a call for mourners, and soon the rude altar was filled mostly by the afore-mentioned young fellows. The old man looked them over for a moment, and with keen intuition felt that it was perhaps a "lark" on the boys' parts, and he knelt to pray.

"O Lord," he began, "here's a crowd of young fellows kneeling round your altar. They've been cussin' and swearin' and drinkin' and spendin' their time in riotous livin', but they've come up here seemingly penitent. They look like penitents, Lord, and I hope they are. They weep like penitents, Lord, and I hope you'll forgive 'em if they are; but, O Lord, I declare they don't smell like penitents!"

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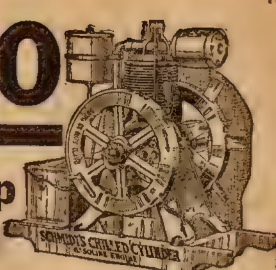
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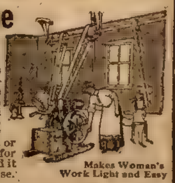

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A LUCKY FALL.

When I started the motor the Surprise rolled out and rose from the grassy slope with a beautiful sweep. The reason I call my biplane the Surprise is obvious. The wind did not stir a leaf in all the green and gold glory of the summer world. It was an ideal time for a flight.

I liked to go to call at Hilda's in the Surprise, for always when in the air I would conquer worlds to say nothing of one mere girl. Shorn of my wings, however, I again become disgustingly humble for a six-footer and a sportsman. In that ten mile flight between my home and Sunnyside, where the Luning family lived in summer, my spirits always described an arch, rising, rising, only to descend again so that I always arrived in humble gloom.

Hilda has that salutary effect on her adorers. Never by the flicker of an eyelash would she give me the comfort of feeling that she preferred me to the others.

For months it had been Gaffney who chiefly had made me miserable—Gaffney, with his long black French racing car, that streaked down the roads like a sinister comet and always turned in at the Luning place. Like his car, Gaffney was long and slim and black, and the way he raised his eyebrows particularly irritated me. I had the satisfaction, however, of feeling that he detested me as I did him.

As I spun through the air on this particular day I surveyed the country for miles around and away down the state road I saw a rushing black streak. Gaffney, too, it seemed, was going to take tea and strawberries with Hilda. I laughed shortly, for I should be there some minutes before he arrived.

I suppose nobody ever quite grows up—and for some childish reason I had the wish to let Gaffney see me, to taunt him with the fact that my aircraft was speedier than his machine. So I veered over the road a mile or so ahead of him. Exactly then did the motor of the Surprise begin to sputter. Something then hummed and buzzed and the biplane flopped down like an awkward chicken, settling squarely upon the mass of telephone and telegraph wires crossing the road at an intersection. The seat and lower gear of the plane stuck down through the wires and the wings balanced it nicely on either side. It was a landing that even I could not have made in a hundred years had I tried.

I might just as well have been stranded a thousand feet high as those miserable twenty feet. Almost instantly the black car was below me. Gaffney naturally stopped

"Can I help?" he inquired gently. "Rules of the road—I can't pass a fellow tourist in trouble without offering aid, you know!"

"As you see," I said shortly, "I'm not in the road. There's nothing you can do."

"I never," he murmured reproachfully, "should forgive myself if I left you now." I stopped fussing with the machinery, to glare at him. "What's wrong?"

"Gaffney," I hurled down at him, "even a mere automobile and its whims should teach you better than that! I don't know. Nobody ever knows what's wrong."

"You should carry a book of emergency rules," he offered gently. "For amateurs!"

"Toss me up yours!" I snapped back.

"Well," said Gaffney with a great show of reluctance, "if you spurn my assistance I must be going. Miss Luning is expecting me. Shall I send the fire ladders from the village?"

He jerked his levers and that was all that saved him from getting the monkey wrench against his head. Then with a strangled shout he stopped his car. Looking down I saw what had happened and made a grab for the spool of wire beside me that had began to unwind. The wire had dangled nearly to the ground and the loose end had been bent and sharpened for some use in the biplane. This tolerable excuse for a fishhook had neatly caught Gaffney's collar and had nearly dragged him from his car. The wire pulled taut because I hastily fastened the upper end.

"Anything wrong?" I asked, politely.

"Confound you!" shouted Gaffney, trying to get at the wire with his hands. "Take off your lasso!"

"Oh!" I said in apparent surprise. "Don't jerk! You may break the wire!"

I will not repeat Gaffney's remarks.

"Well, cut it!" I suggested.

"I can't!" he cried. "The thing pulls so that I can't get purchase on it and I can't reach the tool box! All I can do is to stand still!"

"Well," said I amiably, "stand still then!" Thereupon I proceeded to work with my motor.

He exploded at that. "But you can't go sailing off with me dangling to this thing!" he objected, furiously.

"Oh, yes, I can!" I told him. "The plane will carry the extra weight. At least, I should like to try the experiment!"

Just then with a little whir Hilda's green runabout spun into sight. She gave me the impression that she had set out in great haste. After one flash of her eyes at me she turned to Gaffney, who was trying to lean back as though he did not at all mind being hooked.

"What are you doing with that wire thing on?" she asked.

"It's caught in my coat collar," confessed Gaffney, "and I can't get it out."

"Well," inquired Hilda, "why don't you slide out of your coat then?"

If I looked as foolish as Gaffney did at that illuminating remark, I was a sight. He slipped out of his heavy linen motor coat and shook his shoulders and drove on, leaving his coat dangling from the wire.

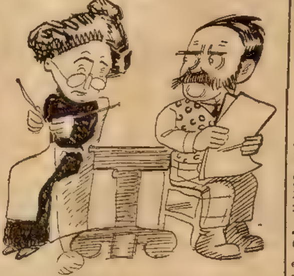
Hilda smiled up at me. "How—how," I asked, "did you know?"

"I wondered why neither of you came," she said, breathlessly. "I—I wondered if anything had happened. So I looked through my father's telescope. And I saw you fall!"

I heard the crickets chirping in the grass as I stared down at her. Then I cried, "I can drop twenty feet easily. I don't care if I do smash the wings getting through—I haven't time to consider a mere airship now. I'm coming down, Hilda—wait!"

For in that instant I had realized the tremendous fact that from Sunnyside her father's telescope gave a view only of the sky—and not one rod of the road down which came long black racing cars!

* * *



Mrs. Benham—You said, before we were married, that my word should be law.

Benham—That was before I found out that the law was unconstitutional.

* * *

The Poet's Due.

The late Frank Work, although a lover of standard novels, had no time for poetry. At a garden party a young woman observed to Mr. Work: "It must be fine to be a poet." "It certainly ought to be fine—fine or imprisonment," said Mr. Work with a gruff laugh.

* * *

Merits of the Sandbag.

Many persons are familiar with the usefulness of the waterbag, but a sandbag is still more desirable. Get some clean, fine sand, dry it thoroughly in a pan or kettle on the stove, make of flannel a bag eight inches square, fill it with the dry sand, sew the opening carefully together, and cover the bag with cotton or linen cloth. This will prevent the sand from sifting out, and also enable you to heat the bag quickly by placing it in the oven or on top of the stove. After once using this you will never again attempt to warm the stomach, feet, or hands of a sick person with a bottle or a brick. The sand retains the heat for a long time, and the bag can be tucked close to the back without inconveniencing the invalid.

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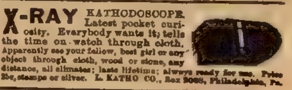

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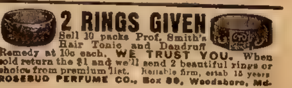

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AN EVEN EXCHANGE.

Ruby Wells jumped up hurriedly when the train pulled into the station at New Rochelle. The usual crowd of week-end visitors filled the aisle and Ruby was only one of hundreds who picked up a suitcase and escaped to the less crowded platform.

Mrs. Hobbes was at the station to meet her. When their greeting was over hostess and guest jumped into a waiting carriage and were whirled away over the country roads.

John Wade and his host, Billy Avery, had also jumped from the same train and were likewise being driven over the country roads toward the Avery house.

"What's doing tonight?" asked Wade. "It's rather unusual to have to bring dress clothes out here, old man."

"Dinner at the Sutcliffe's—fashionable people, you know—and the big dance at the clubs."

"Looks good to me," laughed Wade. "Are there some good-looking girls in store?"

"Sure, and I understand from my wife that Mrs. Hobbes has a peach out with her this week. You'll meet her anyway."

"We have to make more or less of a rush for it, won't we?" Wade laughed. "I mean, of course, the dinner."

"O, we'll make it in good time—here we are now."

The two men got out—Avery insisting on carrying his guest's bag.

After his greeting to Mrs. Avery, Wade was shown to his room, there to prepare for the dinner party. The first thing he did was to open his suitcase that his evening clothes mig' not be unduly creased.

"Great Scott!" he ejaculated. "I've picked up the wrong suitcase! O, I say, what a stunning frock!"

Wade lifted out a gown of exquisite yellow chiffon. His' heart tripped up several beats when he carefully took out the next garments. They were of foamy white and all drawn with creamy satin ribbons. It seemed to Wade that so many little fluffy bows were quite unnecessary. Next there was a pair of yellow slippers. And, last of all, he picked up a wreath of small yellow buds and a creamy pearl peeped from the center of each.

"What a regular beauty you must be!" Wade sank on the couch beside the feminine apparel and felt a peculiar intimacy with the owner of the suitcase.

"I could kick myself for a blind idiot for having, unconsciously, deprived you of all these, but I do hope your hair is red—that gorgeous, sparkling red. I would like to place this wreath on it this minute. If ever we meet—I will never forgive you for having black hair to wear with this costume."

A knock sounded on Wade's door. Avery's head popped in. "O, I say—aren't you realy ready? What in the—"

"Yes—O, yes—I'm ready—just come in and have a look at what I've brought in the way of evening clothes for the dinner dance!"

"Great Scott, man! We are almost due at the Sutcliffe now."

"I'm sorry, old man, but you will have to go without me—I've picked up the wrong bag in that beastly crowded train."

"I'll go and speak to my wife," laughed Avery. "We'll have to fix you up somehow. I think my wife's father had a dress suit at one time."

"Beat it," put in Wade. "I'll not go to a dinner in somebody's hand-me-downs!"

"You've got to. Mrs. Sutcliffe would never forgive my wife if she were the cause of an empty chair at one of her dinners!"

Meantime Mrs. Hobbes sat on the edge of the bed in her guest chamber and talked through tears and laughter to the huddled mass of femininity that was Ruby Wells.

"You must go, Ruby. She would never forgive me. My red dress won't look so bad—"

"Alice Hobbes! How can you sit there and suggest that I wear brilliant flaming red with this scarlet hair of mine—besides—we would have to use a dozen safety pins!"

Ruby Wells would have resorted to tears, but for the effect on nose and eyes. Underneath it all the humor of the situation was trembling into mirth. Finally she laughed.

"All right, Alice—make a scarecrow of me if you want to. I'll do as you say and if I don't make an impression on some man it won't be your fault."

Alice went off smilingly to get her evening dress and slippers for her guest.

Ruby picked up an immaculate pair of dress trousers. "Humph! You are nice and big anyway—I'm awfully sorry I was so perfectly silly as to take up the wrong suitcase. I rather like your pearl studs." She picked up a large box of candy. "I've a good notion to give this to Alice. The one in my own case is exactly the same, and you can give mine to your hostess."

A half hour later the guests at Mrs. Sutcliffe's, well bred though they were, looked up in amazement as Mrs. Hobbes and her guest were announced. They had had a similar shock when Billy Avery entered with John Wade.

The latter looked up when Ruby Wells entered and was being introduced.

"Great Scott! What excruciating taste!" he whispered to Billy Avery. "And look at the hang of the dress—it hikes up in front—"

"Rather the same effect as your vest—isn't it?" covertly suggested Avery.

"And it's pinned in at the waist, I know—" went on Wade, waxing into a white heat. "Is this the peach you spoke of?"

"Must be—" Even Avery was taken aback. "Sh! Here she is."

"Hello, Billy!" Mrs. Hobbes shook hands with Avery. The introductions took place and Wade made room for Ruby Wells at his side.

He couldn't help himself from falling into the snare of her charm. It would have been there if her gown had been yellow, red and green mixed.

"I understand we are to be dinner partners," she said, with a twinkle gleaming from the deep gray of her eyes.

She cast a quizzical glance at the length of arm and hand projecting below Wade's coat sleeve. Another glance traveled over the shoulders, which strove to proclaim their breadth notwithstanding the meager proportions of the coat.

She looked up again and their eyes met. Both strove to quell the laughter, but it was too much. They laughed until every one in the room cast startled glances in their direction.

"What are we laughing at?" asked Ruby when John Wade's eyes had ceased their mockery and her own had grown questioning.

"To be frank, Miss Wells," said Wade, "I laughed because your eyes made me, at my own predicament and because—well, because you are so hopelessly—a—well, out of harmony with the clothes you have on."

Ruby bit her lips. He was so serious and apologetic.

"If I am out of harmony—you must be out of tune. If I may have the impertinence to suggest it—a little sugar might coax that coat of yours to meet."

"That's right, laugh at a fellow because he has had the misfortune to pick up the wrong suitcase—"

"Suitcase!" cried Ruby. "Are you the poor man whose bag I ran off with?"

"I beg your pardon—I ran off with yours!"

"O, very well—as the suit fits——"

"But it doesn't!"

"And is my perfectly good maize-colored gown——"

"Well, I would have said the things were yellow—"

He stopped confused. The slow color mounted in Ruby's cheeks.

"I had pictured—just—you—in that suit."

Toward the end of dinner Ruby leaned near Wade and whispered: "I refuse absolutely to go to that dance tonight in this frock."

"So do I—in these clothes. But listen. Immediately after dinner you and I will make a hasty exit. I will explain the circumstances to Mrs. Sutcliffe."

"What are you going to explain?" asked Ruby with wide open eyes.

"That you and I are going to make ourselves presentable before the dance."

Two hours later Wade strolled impatiently about the drawingroom at the Hobbes home. He straightened an already immaculately set tie and glanced at the perfect fit of his own evening clothes.

Presently he heard a soft little swish on the upper landing of the stairs, and he went to the hall to meet Ruby Wells.

His eyes lit up as she came down the stairs. The soft gown clung in graceful folds and her glorious titian hair was crowned by a wreath of buds from which the pearls peeped.

"I cannot tell you how beautiful you are," he said, while a slight tremor shook his voice.

Ruby was on a level with him now and her large gray eyes lingered shyly on his face. The unspeakable answer was in her eyes.

* * *

In a Sea-Going Cab.

"You say I have been drinking?"

"Well, you were riding around in a hack with a sailor."

"But had I been drinking?"

"Well, you were ordering him to go aloft and reef sail."

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ADJUSTED TO TEMPERATURE The watch is put into a refrigerator and run for 24 hours, then it is put into an oven of 100 degrees temperature and run for 24 hours. Then it is run in normal temperature for 24 hours. This process is continued until the watch runs the same in all temperatures. Not 10 per cent of all watches made are adjusted to temperature.

ADJUSTED TO ISOCHRONISM A careful adjustment so that the speed of a watch when it is fully wound up is the same as when it is almost run down. Not more than four watches out of every one hundred watches made in the United States have this adjustment.

ADJUSTED TO POSITION Adjusting a watch to position is adjusting it so it runs the same in various positions. You can easily see is a watch is to run absolutely accurate the friction of the bearings must be exactly the same for different positions. This adjustment is never attempted on more than a very, very minute percentage of all watches made in the United States.

THE JEWELS used are the finest grade of selected genuine imported ruby and sapphire jewels, absolutely flawless. Nineteen of these chosen gems protect every point. It is well understood in the railroad business that 19 jewels is the proper number for maximum efficiency. Nineteen jewels is regarded by experts as the best number for a perfect watch, more jewels often being a source of complication rather than service. The smaller size ladies' watch has 17 jewels, giving this watch the protection needed for a lifetime of service.

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FACTORY FITTED Every Burlington Special movement is fitted into the case right at the factory where the movement was made—into a case made for that watch. No looseness or wearing of parts against the sides of the case. No rattle or jar.

OUR DIRECT GUARANTEE means that we will make good on any just complaint either as to workmanship or material, in either watch or case, at any time, without red tape or formality. Note, we do not say within ten or twenty years, but at any time. Our guarantee, of course, does not include cleaning or breakages caused by carelessness or accidents, or tinkering with the watch; but, if anything is found wrong with the watch in any way, we will replace the part complained of, or we will repair the watch free of charge, or we will give you a new watch absolutely free, as you may elect. Note: This guarantee is good for 25 years, yes, and longer than 25 years; for any length of time if anything is found wrong with the material—absolutely without restriction.

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Little Stories

Silas' Contribution.

Mrs. Wiggins had "run in" for a minute to talk over the latest news of the village with her friend, Mrs. Hopkins.

"Do you know," she said, "they tell me that old Mr. Magee didn't subscribe but fifty cents to the minister's salary. That doesn't seem possible, does it?"

"To anybody that knows Silas Magee real well, it does," replied Mrs. Hopkins. "You haven't lived in this town all your life, Mis' Wiggins, and you don't know what Silas is capable of. Why, I remember once when he was a young fellow, going to singing school with the rest of us, we got up a picnic.

"One of the girls spoke up and said she'd bring some chicken sandwiches.

"'I'll bring some sliced ham,' says ananother.

"I'll bring some sliced ham,' says another.

"'I'll fetch some jelly and cookies,' says somebody else, and so it went on till we had most everything we could eat, promised. Then one of the boys who had no sisters said he would bring the coffee. That gave Silas his chance. He'd been sitting by, listening to it all, and now he spoke up real brisk, and says he: "I'll bring the water for the coffee!'

"No, Mis' Wiggins. I ain't surprised a mite at his subscribing only fifty cents. The only surprising thing is that it wasn't a quarter."

Why She Didn't Wail.

William Loeb Jr., at a dinner in New York, said of certain customs dodgers

"They do very incriminating things then they claim that these things are mistakes. Granting them to be mistakes, they are suspicious—as suspicious as the business man's wife.

"The wife of a young business man got a wire from her husband the other evening that said. "Shall dine with Milly Brown, an old pal of mine. Will be late. Don't wail for me.'

"When the business man reached home at midnight, his wife met him in the hall.

"'Don't "wail" for you!' she sneered, 'Why, I wouldn't wail for the best man that ever lived. Let alone you!'

"Why, my dear—" he stammered.

"Then, bursting into tears, she handed him the telegram, and in a jiffy he explained that what he had really wired was: 'Shall dine with Billy Brown, an old pal of mine. Will be late. Don't wait for me.'"

Competition.

Many good stories have been told by Methodist ministers gathered in conference and one of the best is that related by Rev. Joseph B. Hingely of Chicago. It tells of the race between ministers of rival denominations to establish a church in one of the growing Montana towns.

"A Baptist clergyman was headed that way," said Rev. Mr. Hingely, "and was discovered by a friend in one of the forward seats of the smoker as the train sped westward.

"'Hush,' said the Baptist to his friend. 'Don't mention me. There's a Congregational preacher three seats behind me, and I'm afraid he'll beat me to Montana. I am determined to get there first and establish my church.'

"But the man was doomed to disappointment, for a Methodist preacher rode west on the cowcatcher and was digging the cellar by the time the Baptist emerged from the train."

To Develop the Bust

To Beauty Editor: I am so ashamed of my thin bust that I want to ask you if there is any harmless way to develop it. My hips and the rest of my body are right for the present styles and I do not want them any larger, but my bust is so flat that I would try anything that gave hope of even three or four more inches development. MARY S.

The only thing I know of that will develop the bust without increasing the size of the hips, or without putting on flesh where not needed, is a prescription put up by The Dr. Kelly Co., especially for small and undeveloped breasts. It is the discovery of a woman physician whose practice was largely among her own sex and in most cases increases the bust measure four to six inches in a month. Send 10c to the Dr. Kelly Co., Dept. J. A., Buffalo, N. Y., and they will send you a trial package of the treatment without charge. This is said to be of great value in cases of arrested development of the bust and will give a full, beautiful form without anyone knowing that the treatment was used.

Many mothers have told me that after the baby had been weaned, the breasts became flabby and shrunken, but the use of Dr. Kelly's prescription made them full and firm. Do not use pads or bust forms, as they never look natural and have a bad effect upon the general health. Neither would I recommend ordinary flesh builders or tonics, as they increase the hips and limbs and with the present styles the form should be slender everywhere except a generously developed bust.

Sharing Good News.

The alarm clock went off with a tring. Curly woke up with a start and sprang out of bed with a bound.

"My, it's a foggy morning!" he exclaimed. But he discovered to his delight that he had set his clock wrong and had still two hours of blessed sleep.

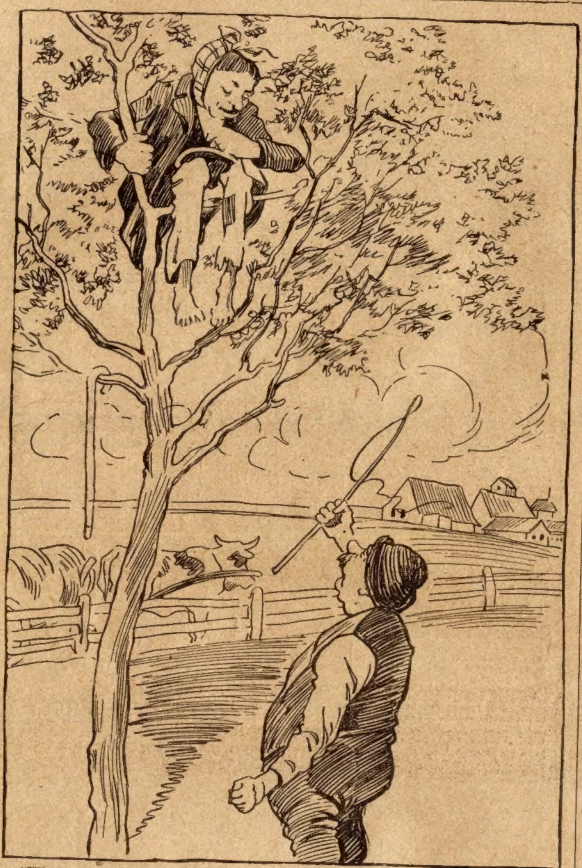
He did not return to bed at once. He slipped on his shoes and tiptoed along the passage. Then he stopped before a door and banged it lustily with his knuckles.

"Confound it!" groaned a voice, smothered in sheets. "Time to get up?"

"No, you've two hours yet," replied Curly.

"Two hours!" exclaimed the smothered voice angrily. "Then, why on earth have you wakened me?"

"Why, to warn you," observed Curly, as he retreated; "for I made the same mistake myself."



"What are you doing there in my cherry tree?"
"I—I just fell out of my aeroplane!"

The Selfish Brute.

The usual large crowd gathered at the New York end of the Brooklyn bridge waiting for trolley cars. An elderly lady, red in the face, flustered and fussy, dug her elbows into convenient ribs, irrespective of owners.

A fat man on her left was the recipient of a particularly vicious jab. She yelled at him, "Say!"

He winced slightly and moved to one side. She, too, sidestepped and thumped him vigorously on the back.

"Say!" she persisted, "does it make any difference which of these cars I take to Greenwood Cemetery?"

"Not to me, madam," he answered, slipping through the opening in the crowd.

Lost a Friend.

"Absentmindedness is a dreadful drawback to success," said Mayor Whitlock of Toledo.

"I know a very absentminded lawyer. The other day it was raining and blowing and he engaged a taxicab. On the way to court he overtook the judge, plodding along on foot through rain and wind and mud, and he halted the taxicab and invited his honor to ride with him.

"The judge accepted this invitation the taxicab duly halted at the courthouse and the absentminded lawyer hopped out and ran upstairs to get ready the papers for a petition he was to present.

"But when court opened and the petition was presented, the judge, who had been so courteous in the cab a few minutes before, now repulsed the lawyer coldly and contemptuously.

"As the poor fellow stood stupefied a crier whispered to him:

"'Do you know what you did? You ran in and left his honor to pay for the taxicab.'"

Easy for Hobo.

Nat Goodwin, the actor, made the statement one afternoon in a Cincinnati hotel that no man could eat a quail a day for thirty consecutive days because no human stomach could digest it.

The friend who heard him make the statement bet him $100 that he was wrong. Goodwin stuck to his claim and agreed to take the bet. Then the two went out into the street, the bargain being that they would have the thirty-day test made by an impartial person. As it happened they struck a hobo who gladly accompanied them into the hotel bar to have a drink.

Goodwin explained the bet to the tramp, and asked him:

"Now do you think you could eat one quail a day for thirty consecutive days?"

"You betcher life!" replied the bum, and added: "But say, pal, for goodness' sake make it turkey."

All Doing the Same.

"What is he so angry at you for?"

"I haven't the slighest idea. We met on the street and we were talking just as friendly as could be when all of a sudden he flared up and tried to lick me."

"And what were you talking about?"

"Oh, just ordinary small talk. I remember he said 'I always kiss my wife three or four times every day.'"

"And what did you say?"

"I said, 'I know at least a dozen men who do the same,' and then he had a fit."

To Women Who Dread Motherhood

Information How They May Give Birth to Happy, Healthy Children Absolutely Without Pain—Sent Free.

No women need any longer dread the pains of childbirth, or remain childless. Dr. J. H. Dye has devoted his life to relieving the sorrows of women. He has proved that all pain at childbirth may be entirely banished, and he will gladly tell you how it may be done absolutely free of charge. Send your name and address to Dr. J. H. Dye, 16 Lewis Block, Buffalo, N. Y., and he will send you, postpaid, his wonderful book which tells how to give birth to happy, healthy children, absolutely without pain; also how to cure sterility. Do not delay but write today.

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France's Ideal Woman.

"What is the most excellent quality in woman?" a Paris paper with the soaring name of Excelsior asked its readers. Several thousand replies have already been received. The paper asks each person to name the ten qualities he or she prefers in a woman, says the Boston Evening Transcript. The results of the poll so far already furnish subjects for dozens of sermons and essays in moral philosophy. Sixty virtues have up till now been named. The seven first have always been at the top of the poll since the beginning of the ballot in the following order: Goodness, orderliness, devotion, thrift, gentleness, intelligence and amiability.

What a tribute to the essential solidity of the French people is the fact that it asks first of all for goodness and, seconly, for orderliness, in its women! The former virtue has scored 19,308 votes and the latter 18,470. The fact that devotion comes third with 17,904, would tend to show that many of the voters are men. On the other hand, faithfulness, patience and modesty come only eighth, nintn and tenth. Hitherto patience had been in front of faithfulness, but at the latest count faithfulness forged ahead. However, will power comes only twenty-fourth, with 3,000-odd votes, hardly more than one-sixth of those polled for devotion, and this seems to be a sign of masculine opinion.

It will startle some lady judges of French character to find that only 2,326 votes mentioned elegance as one of the ten most excellent qualities in women, which takes only the thirty-first place on the list. It will, indeed, surprise everybody to learn that pride is asked for in woman by only 528 votes and that its place is fifty-second on the list. But perhaps the most instructive point of all is the name of the sixtieth and last virtue, meekness, for which only ninety-six overbearing men voted. This is consoling thing for Frenchwomen.

* * *

As the Aviators See Us.

It is a great surprise to the uninitiated to see how uniform the surface of the earth appears when viewed from a great altitude, writes Augustus Post in the Columbian. Although individual objects are hard to identify, such things as rivers, lakes and railways are easily recognized by their contour, direction or some slight individuality or characteristic which can readily be shown upon a map, especially if the maps are made or corrected by men who fly above the earth and get an accurate and literal bird's-eye view of its surface. Objects which seem to loom up with the greatest clearness to one standing on the surface of the earth appear very different and quite insignificant when viewed from above; while a patch of colored soil which would not be noticed at all by a person standing on the ground is a most valuable landmark to the air sailor. Map cases are fitted to the aviator's seat, on touring aeroplanes, where they can be readily seen, and M. Prier on his late journey from London to Paris had his route clearly shown on a map which he carried mounted in a cleverly arranged map case, inside of which it could be unrolled, keeping his route continually before him as he passed rapidly over his course. This case was provided with a transparent cover, which thoroughly protected it from the wind, rain and oil thrown off by the motor. With a map, watch, compass, aneroid and revolution counter, the air pilot is thoroughly equipped for navigating the atmosphere and traveling as far as his motor will take him without stopping.

* * *

The Proper Countenance.

The auctioneer—morbid and forbidding.

The bridge fiend—wistful.

The waiter—tipsy.

The lumberman—bored.

The glazier—with a pained expression.

The manicure—handsome.

The bucketshop manager—pale.

The bride—well groomed.

The police court judge—fine.

The night watchman—mournful.

The bootblack—with a shining countenance.

The poker player—winsome.

The rah-rah boy—cheerful.

The marble cutter—with a stony stare.

The tobacconist—puffed up.

The confectioner—sweet.

The paperhanger—wall eyed.

The carpenter—chipper; you never saw one plain.

* * *

The Marriage of Cousins.

Luther Burbank, in "Training of the Human Plant," says: "While it now seems clear, in the light of recent studies, that the children of first cousins who have been reared under different environmental influences and who have remained separated from birth until married are not likely to be impaired either mentally, morally or physically (though the second generation will be more than likely to show retrogression), yet first-cousin marriages, where they have been reared under similar environment, should no doubt be prohibited."

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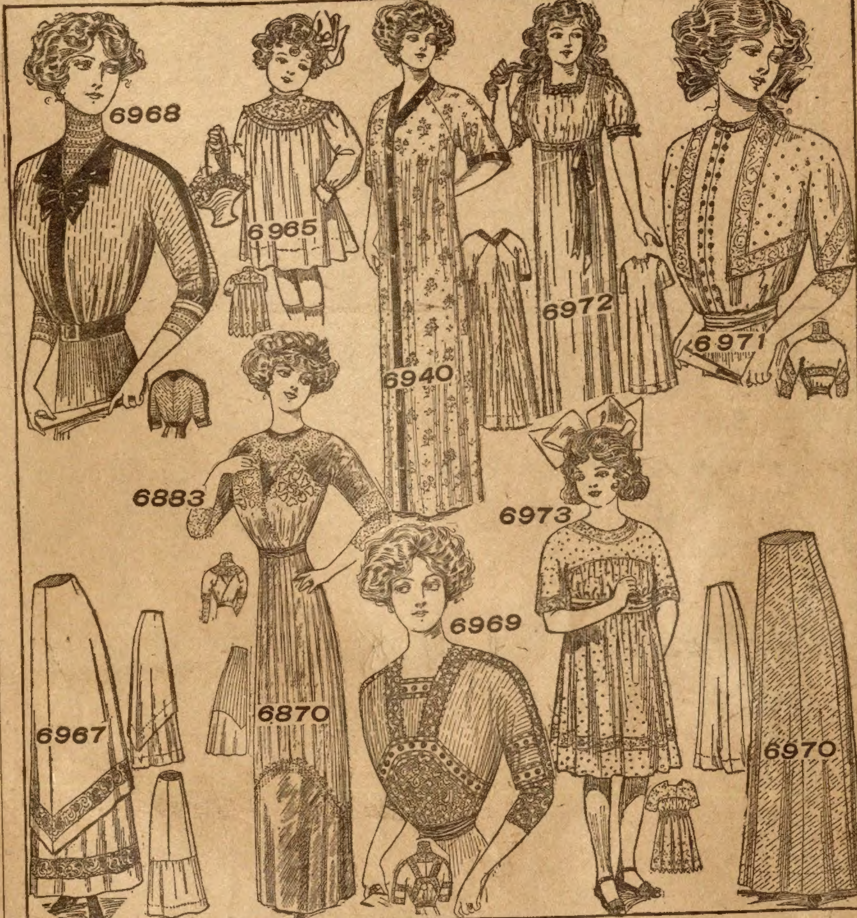

6968—Over Blouse with Body and Sleeves in One, 34 to 42 bust. The quantity of material required for the medium size is 2½ yards 27, 36 or 44 inches wide, or 1⅛ yards 44 inches if sleeves are slightly pieced, with ¾ yard 27 inches wide for the trimming.

6965—Child's Dress with Straight Lower Edge, 6 mos., 1, 2 and 4 years. For a child of 2 years of age will be required 2½ yards of material 27 inches wide, or 1¾ yards 36 or 44 inches wide, with ⅜ yards 18 inches wide to make as shown in the front view; 2 yards of flouncing 23 inches wide, ⅜ yard of all-over embroidery and ½ yard of plain material 27 or 36 inches wide to make as shown in back view.

6940—Raglan Kimono, Small 34 or 36, Medium 38 or 40, Large 42 or 44 bust. For a woman of medium size will be required 7½ yards of material 27 inches wide, 6½ yards 36 or 4 yards 44 inches wide, with 4¼ yards of ribbon or 1 yard of material 27 inches wide for the bands.

6972—Empire Night-Gown for Misses and Small Women, 14, 16 and 18 years. For the 16-year size will be required 4½ yards of material 36 or 3½ yards 44 inches wide with 2¼ yards of lace and 2¼ yards of beading.

6971—Peasant Waist with Bolero Effect for Misses and Small Women, 14, 16 and 18 years. For the 16-year size the blouse will require ⅞ yard of materal 27, 36 or 44 inches wide for the plain portions, 1¼ yards 27, ⅞ yard 36 or 44 for the bolero portion, with 3¾ yards of banding to make as illustrated; or 1¾ yards 27 or 36 or 1¼ yards 44 inches wide if one material is used throughout. For the under sleeves will be required ½ yard, for yoke and under-sleeves ⅞ yard 18 inches wide.

6967—Skirt with Tunic having Straight Lower Edge for Misses and Small Women, 14, 16 and 18 years. The quantity of material required for the 16-year size is 4½ yards of bordered material 27 inches wide, with 1⅝ yards of plain material 36 inches wide for the gored upper portion, or 6 yards 27, 4½ yards 33 or 3⅜ yards 44 inches wide when plain material is used throughout.

6883—Fancy Waist, 34 to 40 bust. 6870—Skirt with Circular Flounce, 22 to 30 waist. For the medium size the under portion of the the waist will require 1¾ yards of materal 24 or 27, ⅞ yard 36 or 44 inches wide, the pointed portions 1¼ yards 24 or 27, ⅞ yard 36 or 44. For the under sleeves, ¾ yard 18 inches wide. For the beaded yoke and sleeve trimming will be needed ¾ yard 21 inches wide. For the upper portion of the skirt will be required 4½ yards 24 or 27, 2½ yards 36 or 44 inches wide, and for the flounce 2¼ yards 24 or 27 or 1⅝ yards 36 or 44 inches wide.

6969—Fancy Waist, 34 to 40 bust. The quantity of material required for the medium size is 1½ yards 27 inches wide, 1 yard 36 or ⅞ yard 44 with 1⅛ yards of all-over lace 18 inches wide, 2¼ yards of lace banding and 2⅞ yards of embroidered banding, ⅝ yard 18 inches wide for yoke and collar.

6973—Girl's Empire Dress, 8, 10 and 12 years. For a girl of ten years will be needed 3¼ yards of material 27 inches wide, 2¼ yards 36 or 44 inches wide with 3¾ yards of banding; or 2⅛ yards of flouncing 27 inches wide with ⅝ yard 18 for the yoke and sleeves to make as shown in the back view.

6970—Nine Gored Skirt 22 to 36 waist. The quantity of material required for the medium size is 7 yards 27, 5 yards 36 or 4¼ yards 44 inches when material has figure or nap; 5½ yards 27, 4 yards 36 or 3 yards 44 inches wide when material has neither figure nor nap. The width of the walking skirt at the lower edge is 2¾ yards.

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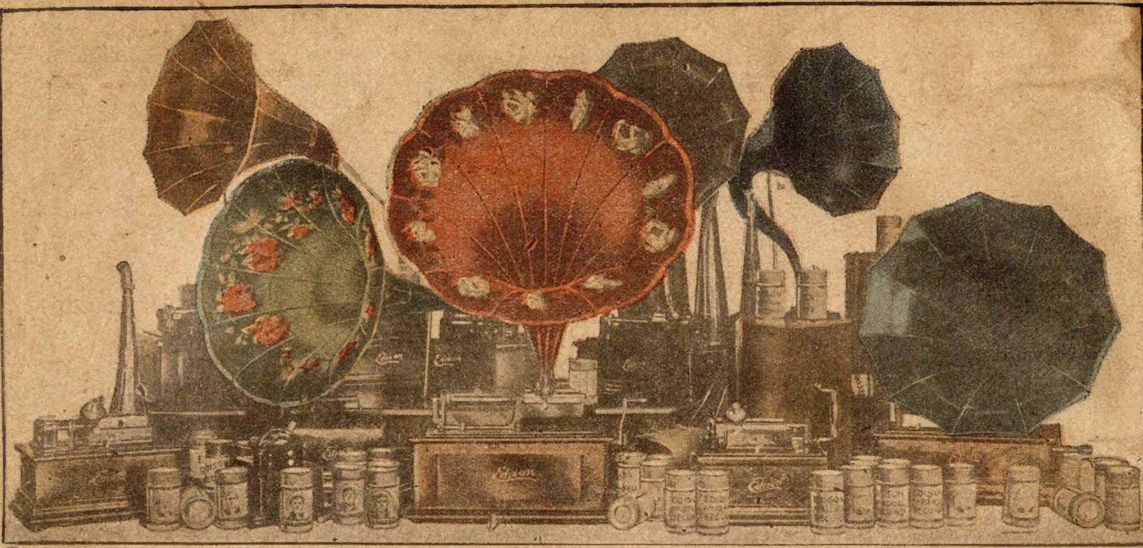

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